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By Dr. Seuss

AN ALBUM OF CHRISTMAS FOLK SONGS

THE FIR TREE
By Hans Christian Andersen

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TABLE OF CONTENTS—DECEMBER 1956

PAGE

5 **THE FIR TREE by Hans Christian Andersen**
From "Andersen's Fairy Tales"

19 **WHAT'S THE GOOD WORD?**
A crossword puzzle

20 **THE FABULOUS FRAUD**
An historical comic

23 **RIDDLES**

24 **ELIZABETH ELIZA'S PIANO by Lucretia P. Hale**
From "The Peterkin Papers"

30 **LIMERICKS BY LEAR**
From "Nonsense Books"

32 **DEATH VALLEY SCOTTY'S FAMOUS RIDE by David P. Morgan**
From "True Adventures of Railroaders"

41 **DO YOU BELIEVE IT?**
A quiz

42 **PERCY PIG**
A humorous comic

47 **AN ALBUM OF CHRISTMAS FOLK SONGS**
From "American Folk Songs for Christmas"

56 **HAVE YOU HEARD THESE?**

60 **OSWALD'S PET DRAGON by Carl Glick**
From "Oswald's Pet Dragon"

PAGE

69 **WHY DO STARS TWINKLE?**
A wonder question from The Book of Knowledge

70 **THE OLD SURPRISE by Bee Lewi**
A picture-word poem

72 **THE WISDOM OF KING SOLOMON**
by Elizabeth Coatsworth
From Story Parade Magazine

77 **HORTON HEARS A WHO! by Dr. Seuss**
Adapted from the picture book illustrated by the author

102 **PUZZLE PARADE**

104 **PUFFER MAKES A MOVIE**
A humorous comic

108 **RIDDLES**

110 **THE RUNAWAY SOLDIER**
by Fruma Gottschalk
From "The Runaway Soldier and other tales"

119 **HOW IT GOT ITS NAME**
An historical comic

120 **NEW BOOKS YOU WILL ENJOY**
by Phyllis Fenner

122 **ANSWERS TO PUZZLES**

Cover illustration by GYO FUJIKAWA

OUR SPECIAL PAPER AND BINDING

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THE FIR TREE

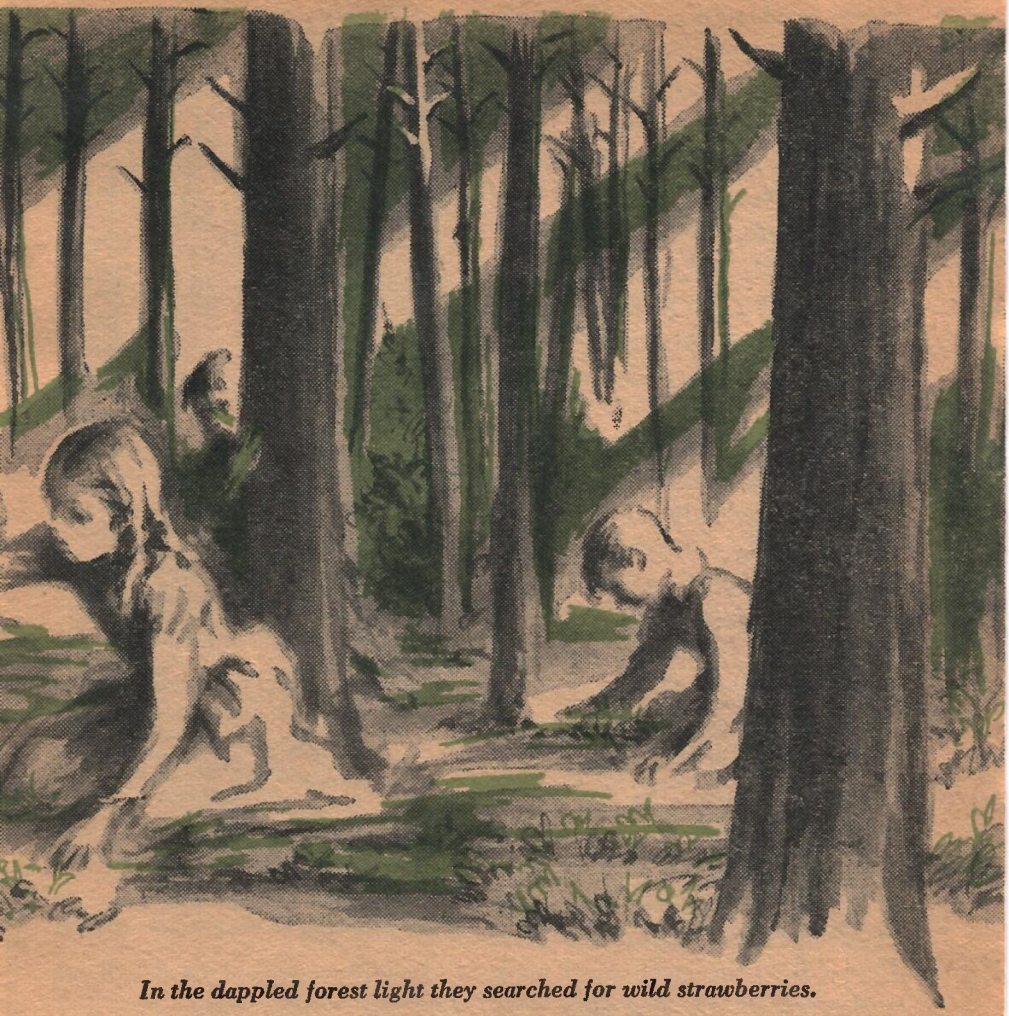
A story by HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

OUT in the woods stood a nice little Fir-tree. The place he had was a very good one; the sun shone on him; as to fresh air, there was enough of that, and round him grew many large-sized comrades, pines as well as firs. But the little Fir wanted so very much to be a grown-up tree like his sturdy companions nearby.

From "The Fairy Tales of Hans Christian Andersen."

Illustrations by LAWRENCE BEALL SMITH

He did not think of the warm sun and of the fresh air; he did not care for the little cottage children that ran about and prattled when they were in the woods looking for wild strawberries. The children often came with a whole pitcher full of berries, or a long row of them threaded on a straw, and sat down near the young tree and said, "Oh, how pretty he is! what a nice little fir!" But this was what the Tree could not bear to hear.



In the dappled forest light they searched for wild strawberries.

At the end of a year he had shot up a good deal, and after another year he was another long bit taller; for with fir trees one can always tell by the shoots how many years old they are.

"Oh, were I but such a high tree as the others are!" sighed he. "Then I should be able to spread out my branches, and with the tops to look into the wide world! Then would the birds build nests among my branches; and when there was a breeze, I

could bend with as much stateliness as the others!"

Neither the sunbeams, nor the birds, nor the red clouds, which morning and evening sailed above them, gave the little Tree any pleasure.

In winter, when the snow lay glittering on the ground, a hare would often come leaping along, and jump right over the little Tree. Oh, that made him so angry! But two winters were past, and in the third the Tree was so large that the hare was obliged to go around it. "To grow and grow, to get older and be tall," thought the Tree — "that, after all, is the most delightful thing in the world!"

In autumn the woodcutters always came and felled some of the largest trees. This happened every year; and the young Fir tree, that had now grown to a very comely size, trembled at the sight; for the magnificent great trees fell to the earth with noise and cracking, the branches were lopped off, and the trees looked long and bare; they were hardly to be recognized; and then they were laid in carts, and the horses dragged them out of the woods.

Where did they go to? What became of them?

The fir tree was so tiny that the hare was able to leap right over it.

In spring, when the Swallows and the Storks came, the Tree asked them, "Don't you know where they have been taken? Have you not met them anywhere?"

The Swallows did not know anything about it; but the Stork looked musing, nodded his head,

and said: "Yes, I think I know; I met many ships as I was flying hither from Egypt; on the ships were magnificent masts, and I venture to assert that it was they that smelt so of fir. I may congratulate you, for they lifted themselves on high most majestically!"

"Oh, were I but old enough to fly across the sea! But how does the sea look in reality? What is it like?"

"That would take a long time to explain," said the Stork, and with these words off he went with a great flapping of wings.

"Rejoice in thy growth!" said the Sunbeams, "rejoice in thy vigorous growth, and in the life that moveth within thee!"

And the Wind kissed the Tree, and the Dew wept tears over him; but try as he might the Fir understood it not.

WHEN Christmas came, quite young trees were cut down; trees which often were not even as large or of the same age as this Fir tree, who could never rest, but always wanted to be off. These young trees, and they were always the finest looking, retained their branches; they were laid on carts, and the horses drew them out of the woods.

"Where are they going to?" asked the Fir. "They are not taller than I; there was one indeed that was considerably shorter and why do they retain all their branches? Whither are they taken?"

"We know! we know!" chirped the Sparrows. "We have peeped in at the windows in the town below! We know whither they are taken! The greatest splendor and the greatest magnificence one can imagine await them. We peeped through the windows, and saw them planted in the middle of the warm room, and ornamented with the most splendid things — with gilded apples, with toys, and many hundred lights!"

"And then?" asked the Fir tree, trembling in every bough. "And then? What happens then?"

"We did not see anything more; it was incomparably beautiful."

"I would fain know if I am destined for so glorious a career." cried the Tree, rejoicing. "That is still better than to cross the sea! What a longing do I suffer! Were Christmas but come! I am now tall, and my branches

spread like the others that were carried off last year! Oh, were I but already on the cart! Were I in the warm room with all the magnificence! Yes; then something better, something grander, will surely follow, or wherefore should they thus ornament me? Something better, grander, must follow — but what? Oh, how I long, how I suffer! I do not know what is the matter with me!"

"Rejoice in our presence!" said the Air and the Sunlight; "rejoice in thy own fresh youth!"

BUT the Tree did not rejoice; he grew and grew, and was green both winter and summer. People that saw him said, "What a fine tree!" and toward Christmas he was one of the first that was cut down. The axe struck deep into the very pith; the Tree fell to the earth with a sigh; he felt a pang — it was like a swoon; he could not think of happiness, for he was sorrowful at being separated from his home, from the place where he had sprung up. He knew that he should never see his dear comrades, the bushes and flowers around him, any more; perhaps not even the birds! The departure was not at all agreeable.

The Tree came to himself when he was unloaded in a courtyard with the other trees, and heard a man say, "That one is splendid, we don't want the others." Then two servants came in rich livery and carried the Fir tree into a large and splendid drawing-room. Portraits were hanging on the walls, and near the white porcelain stove stood two Chinese vases with lions on the covers. There, too, were large easy chairs, silken sofas, tables full of picture-books, and full of toys worth hundreds and hundreds of crowns — at least the children said so. And the Fir tree was stuck upright in a cask that was filled with sand; but no one could see that it was a cask, for green cloth was hung all around it, and it stood on a large gayly colored carpet. Oh, how the Tree quivered! What was to happen? The servants, as well as the young ladies, decorated it. On one branch there hung little nets cut out of colored paper, and each net was filled with sugar-plums; and among the other boughs gilded apples and walnuts were suspended, looking as though they had grown there, and little blue and

white tapers were placed among the leaves. Dolls that looked for all the world like men — the Tree had never beheld such before — were seen among the foliage, and at the very top a large star of gold tinsel was fixed. It was really splendid — beyond description splendid.

"This evening!" said they all; "how it will shine this evening!"

"Oh," thought the Tree, "if the evening were but come! If the tapers were but lighted! And then I wonder what will happen! Perhaps the other trees from the forest will come to look at me! Perhaps the Sparrows will beat against the window-panes! I wonder if I shall take root here, and winter and summer stand covered with ornaments!"

He knew very much about the matter! But he was so impatient that for sheer longing he got a pain in his back, and this with trees is the same thing as a headache with us.

The candles were now lighted. What brightness! What splendor! The Tree trembled so in every bough that one of the tapers set fire to the foliage. It blazed up splendidly.

"Help! Help!" cried the young ladies, and they quickly put out

A sudden puff of flame swept through the tree and it blazed brightly.

the fire before it spread.

Now the Tree did not even dare tremble. What a state he was in. He was so uneasy lest he should lose something of his splendor, that he was quite bewildered amidst the glare and brightness; when suddenly both folding-doors opened, and a troop of children rushed in as if they would upset the Tree. The older persons followed quietly; the little ones stood quite still. But it was only for a moment; then they shouted so that the whole place reechoed with their rejoicing; they danced around the Tree, and one present after the other was pulled off.

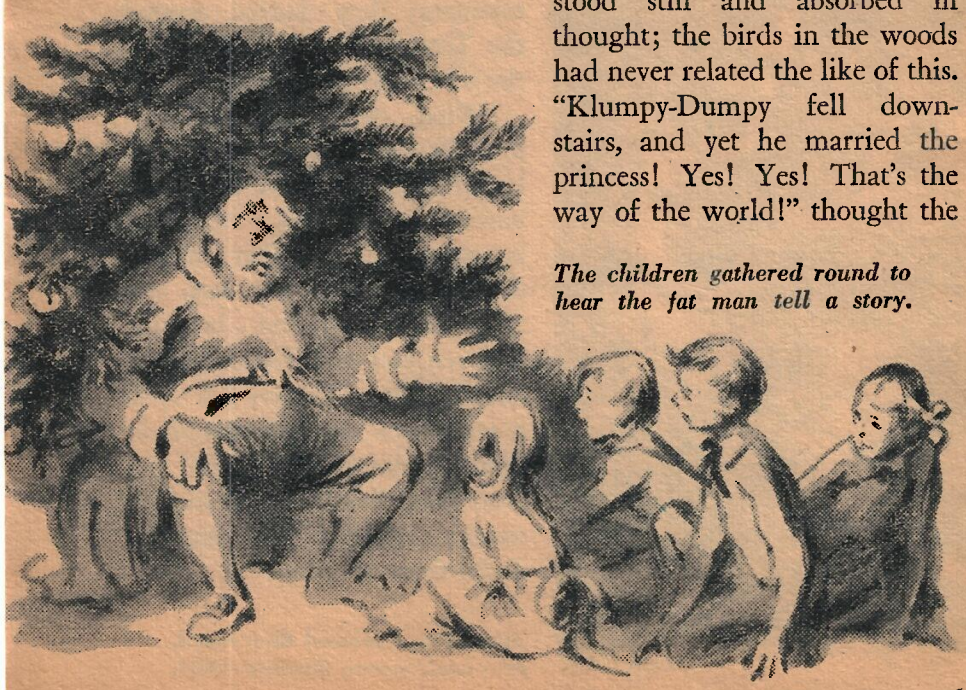
"What are they about?" thought the Tree. "What is to happen now?" And the lights burned down to the very branches, and as they burned down they were put out, one after the other, and then the children had permission to plunder the Tree. So they fell upon it with such violence that all its branches cracked; if it had not been fixed firmly in the cask, it would certainly have tumbled down from its place.

Around and around they raced, in a mad, merry, dancing whirl.

The children danced about with their beautiful playthings; no one looked at the Tree except the old nurse, who peeped between the branches but it was only to see if there was a fig or an apple left that had been forgotten.

"A story! a story!" cried the children, drawing a little fat man toward the Tree. He seated himself under it, and said: "Now we are in the shade, and the Tree can listen, too. But I shall tell only one story. Now which will you have: that about Ivedy-Avedy, or about Klumpy-Dumpy who tumbled downstairs, and yet after all came to the throne and married the princess?"

And the man told about Klumpy-Dumpy that tumbled down, who notwithstanding came to the throne, and at last married the princess. And the children clapped their hands and cried out, "Oh, go on! Do go on!" They wanted to hear about Ivedy-Avedy too, but the little man only told them about Klumpy-Dumpy. The Fir tree stood still and absorbed in thought; the birds in the woods had never related the like of this. "Klumpy-Dumpy fell downstairs, and yet he married the princess! Yes! Yes! That's the way of the world!" thought the



The children gathered round to hear the fat man tell a story.

Fir tree, and believed it all, because the man who told the story was so good-looking. "Well, well! who knows, perhaps I may fall downstairs, too, and get a princess as a wife!" And he looked forward with joy to the morrow, when he hoped to be decked out again with lights, playthings, fruits, and tinsel.

"I won't tremble tomorrow," thought the Fir tree. "I will enjoy to the full all my splendor. Tomorrow I shall hear again the story of Klumpy-Dumpy, and perhaps that of Ivedy-Avedy, too." And the whole night the Tree stood still and in deep thought.

In the morning the servant and the housemaid came in.

"Now, then, the splendor will begin again," thought the Fir. But they dragged him out of the room, and up the stairs into the loft; and here in a dark corner, where no daylight could enter, they left him. "What's the meaning of this?" though the Tree. "What am I to do here? What shall I hear now, I wonder?" And he leaned against the wall, lost in reverie. Time enough had he, too, for his reflections; for days and nights passed on, and nobody came up; and when at last somebody did come, it was only to put some great trunks in a corner out of the way. There stood the Tree quite hidden; it seemed as if he had been entirely forgotten.

"'Tis now winter out of doors!" thought the Tree. "The earth is hard and covered with snow; men cannot plant me now, and therefore I have been put up here under shelter till the springtime comes! How thoughtful that is! How kind man is, after all! If it only were not so dark here, and so terribly lonely! Not even a hare. And out in the woods it was so pleasant."

SQUEAK! squeak!" said a little Mouse at the same moment, peeping out of his hole. And then another little one came. They sniffled about the Fir tree, and rustled among the branches.

"It is dreadfully cold," said the Mouse. "But for that, it would be delightful here, old Fir, wouldn't it?"

"I am by no means old," said the Fir tree. "There's many a one considerably older than I am."

"Where do you come from," asked the Mice; "and what can you do?" They were so extremely curious. "Tell us about the

most beautiful spot on the earth. Have you never been there? Were you never in the larder, where cheeses lie on the shelves, and hams hang from above; where one dances about on tallow-candles; that place where one enters lean, and comes out again fat and portly?"

"I know no such place," said the Tree, "but I know the woods, where the sun shines, and where the little birds sing." And then he told them all about his youth; and the little Mice had never heard the like before; and they listened and said:

"Well, to be sure! How much you have seen! How happy you must have been!"

"I?" said the Fir tree, thinking over what he had himself related. "Yes, in reality those were happy times." And then he told about Christmas Eve, when he was decked out with cakes and candles.

"Oh," said the little Mice, "how fortunate you have been, old Fir tree!"

"I am by no means old," said he. "I came from the woods this winter; I am in my prime, and am only rather short for my age."

"What delightful stories you know!" said the Mice; and the next night they came with four other little Mice, who were to hear what the tree recounted; and the more he related, the more plainly he remembered all himself; and it appeared as if those times had really been happy times. "But they may still come — they may still come. Klumpy-Dumpy fell downstairs and yet he got a princess," and he thought at the moment of a nice little Birch tree growing out in the woods; to the Fir, that would be a real charming princess.

"Who is Klumpy-Dumpy?" asked the Mice. So then the Fir tree told the whole fairy tale, for he could remember every single word of it; and the little Mice jumped for joy up to the very top of the Tree. Next night two more Mice came, and on Sunday two Rats, even; but they said the stories were not interesting, which vexed the little Mice; and they, too, now began to think them not so very amusing either.

"Do you know only one story?" asked the Rats.

"Only that one," answered the Tree. "I heard it on my happiest evening; but I did not then know how happy I was."

"It is a very stupid story. Don't

The mice sniffled about the fir tree and rustled in its branches.

you know one about bacon and tallow candles? Can't you tell any larder stories?"

"No," said the Tree.

"Then good-bye," said the Rats; and they went home.

AT last the little Mice stayed away also; and the Tree sighed: "After all, it was very pleasant when the sleek little Mice sat around me and listened to what I told them. Now that too is over. But I will take good care to enjoy myself when I am brought out again."

But when was that to be? Why, one morning there came a quantity of people and set to work in the loft. The trunks were moved, the Tree was pulled out and thrown — rather hard, it is true — down on the floor, but a man drew him toward the stairs, where the daylight shone.

"Now a merry life will begin again," thought the Tree. He felt the fresh air, the first sunbeam — and now he was out in the courtyard. All passed so quickly, there was so much going on around him, that the Tree quite forgot to look to himself. The court adjoined a garden, and all was in flower; the roses hung so fresh and odorous over the balustrade, the lindens were in blossom, the Swallows flew by, and said, "Quirre-vit! my husband is come!" but it was not the Fir tree that they meant.

"Now, then, I shall really enjoy life," said he, exultingly, and spread out his branches; but alas! they were all withered and yellow. It was in a corner that he lay, among weeds and nettles. The golden star of tinsel was

still on the top of the Tree, and glittered in the sunshine.

In the courtyard some of the merry children were playing who had danced at Christmas round the Fir tree, and were so glad at the sight of him. One of the youngest ran and tore off the golden star.

"Only look what is still on the ugly old Christmas tree!" said he, trampling on the branches, so that they all cracked beneath his feet.

And the Tree beheld all the beauty of the flowers, and the freshness in the garden; he beheld himself, and wished he had remained in his dark corner in the loft; he thought of his first youth in the woods, of the merry Christmas Eve, and the little Mice who had listened to the story of Klumpy-Dumpy.

"'Tis over — 'tis past!" said the poor Tree. "Had I but rejoiced when I had reason! But now 'tis past, 'tis past!"

AND the gardener's boy chopped the Tree into small pieces; there was a whole heap lying there. The wood flamed up splendidly under the large brewing copper.

The boys played about in the court, and the youngest wore the gold star on his breast which the Tree had had on the happiest evening of his life. However, that was over now — the Tree was gone, the story at an end. All, all was over, every tale must end at last.

ANNOUNCING A BRAILLE EDITION OF CHILDREN'S DIGEST

A Braille edition of CHILDREN'S DIGEST has been started for blind children by the American Printing House for the Blind, Louisville, Ky. CHILDREN'S DIGEST is the second largest circulation magazine for children in America (second only to Humpty Dumpty). It has been published since 1950. CHILDREN'S DIGEST contains each month a selection of the best children's stories, both old and new, from other magazines and books. Subscriptions to the Braille edition of CHILDREN'S DIGEST are being sold at cost, $8.70 per year, by the American Printing House for the Blind, Louisville, Ky.

What's the Good WORD?

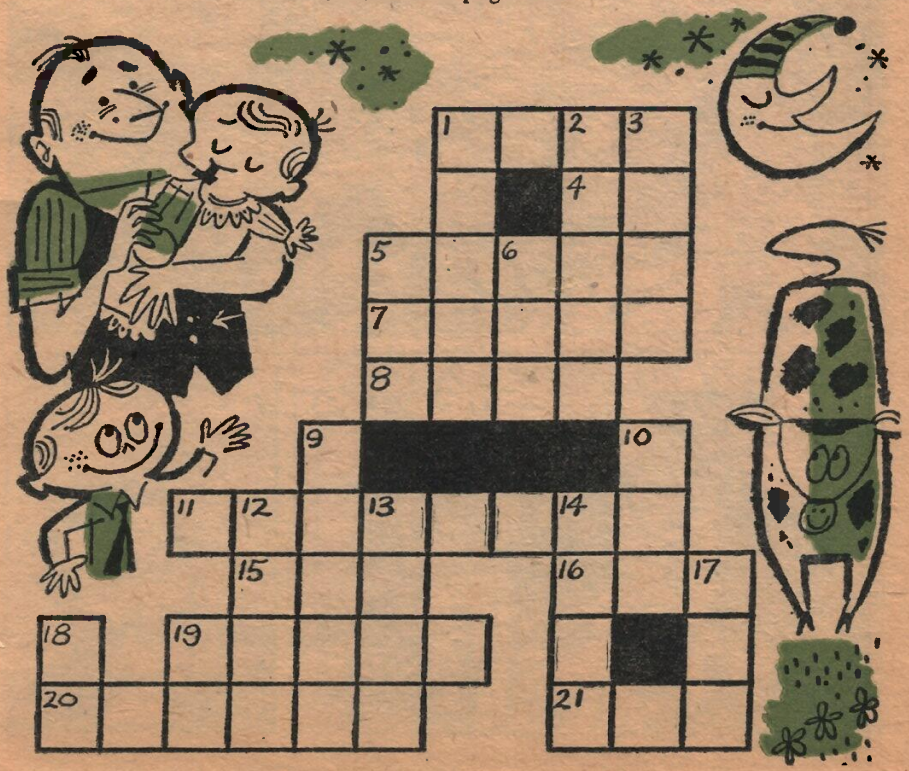
ACROSS

1. Babies' napkins
4. Behold!
5. A fully grown female person
7. Smallest particles of matter
8. Footgear
11. Boys and girls
15. Short form of evening
16. Sleeping unit
19. To shatter; smash
20. Goes very fast
21. Unhappy

DOWN

1. Soup
2. To accuse
3. One's male children
5. Used to be
6. Noise made by a cow
9. Resided
10. A single unit
12. At this place
13. Meadows
14. Flows back to sea
17. Father
18. Like
19. To exist

Solution on page 122



From "50 Nifty Crossword Puzzles, © 1949 by Hart Publishing Co.

The FABULOUS FRAUD

INCREDIBLE STORY OF THE WILY RUSSIAN PRINCE WHO MAGICALLY MADE TOWNS, PALACES AND FLEETS APPEAR OVERNIGHT—TO CONVINCE HIS QUEEN THAT HER BARREN NEW POSSESSIONS WERE LANDS OF WEALTH AND BEAUTY.
IN 1787 CATHERINE THE GREAT OF RUSSIA WAS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL MONARCHS OF EUROPE. PRINCE POTEMKIN WAS HER MOST POWERFUL MINISTER.
ASK HIM ABOUT THE WONDERFUL NEW CITIES, YOUR MAJESTY.
POTEMKIN, WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH THE NEW SOUTHERN PROVINCES I GAVE YOU TO GOVERN?
PERHAPS YOUR MAJESTY WOULD CARE TO JOURNEY SOUTH TO SEE?

ACTUALLY, POTEMKIN HAD LEFT THE BARREN SOUTHERN PROVINCES UNTOUCHED.
BUT HE HAD A PLAN TO DECEIVE THE AGED CATHERINE.
WHERE ARE WE GOING? WHY MUST WE LEAVE OUR HOMES?
DON'T ASK QUESTIONS —MOVE!
ENTIRE VILLAGES WERE DRIVEN SOUTH AND FORCED TO WORK IN THE SWAMPS.
HURRY! I WANT SEVEN CITIES "BUILT" IN A MONTH. THE QUEEN IS ABOUT TO START HER TOUR!
THE ROYAL TOUR BEGAN AND CATHERINE VIEWED HER ROYAL DOMAIN FROM A LUXURIOUS RIVER BARGE.
FROM HER ROYAL BARGE, CATHERINE SAW POTEMKIN'S VILLAGE.

BUT WHEN THE QUEEN HAD PASSED...
TAKE DOWN THAT ROMAN TEMPLE! IT MUST BE PUT UP AGAIN THIRTY MILES AWAY DOWN RIVER!
FOR A THOUSAND MILES CATHERINE SAW "WONDERS" THAT DIDN'T EXIST.
HAIL TO HER MAJESTY!
SPLENDID CITIES — LOYAL SUBJECTS! POTEMKIN, YOU ARE THE BEST GOVERNOR RUSSIA HAS EVER HAD!
THE AGED QUEEN WAS COMPLETELY FOOLED BY POTEMKIN'S FAKE AND MOVABLE VILLAGES. THE PROVINCES WERE AS BARREN AS BEFORE...
...AND THUS WAS ACCOMPLISHED ONE OF HISTORY'S MOST FABULOUS FRAUDS!

Riddles

1. When would a window be good to eat?

2. What is the biggest job of moving ever done?

3. What is the definition of a volcano?

4. Why is a careful man like a pin?

5. What can you eat that nobody else on earth ever saw before?

6. What has twenty heads but can't think?

7. Why is a crossword puzzle like a quarrel?

8. Why does everybody else have more money in their pockets than you have?

9. Why didn't the little boy mind the baby sitter?

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES

1. When it is jammed. 2. Wheeling West Virginia. 3. A mountain that blew its top. 4. Because his head prevents him from going too far. 5. You can break a peanut shell and eat the kernel. 6. A book of matches. 7. Because one word leads to another. 8. Because you have no money in their pockets. 9. Because she was supposed to mind him.

Elizabeth Eliza's Piano

What a peculiar musical instrument—it stood in the parlor but the poor pianist had to sit on the veranda to play it!

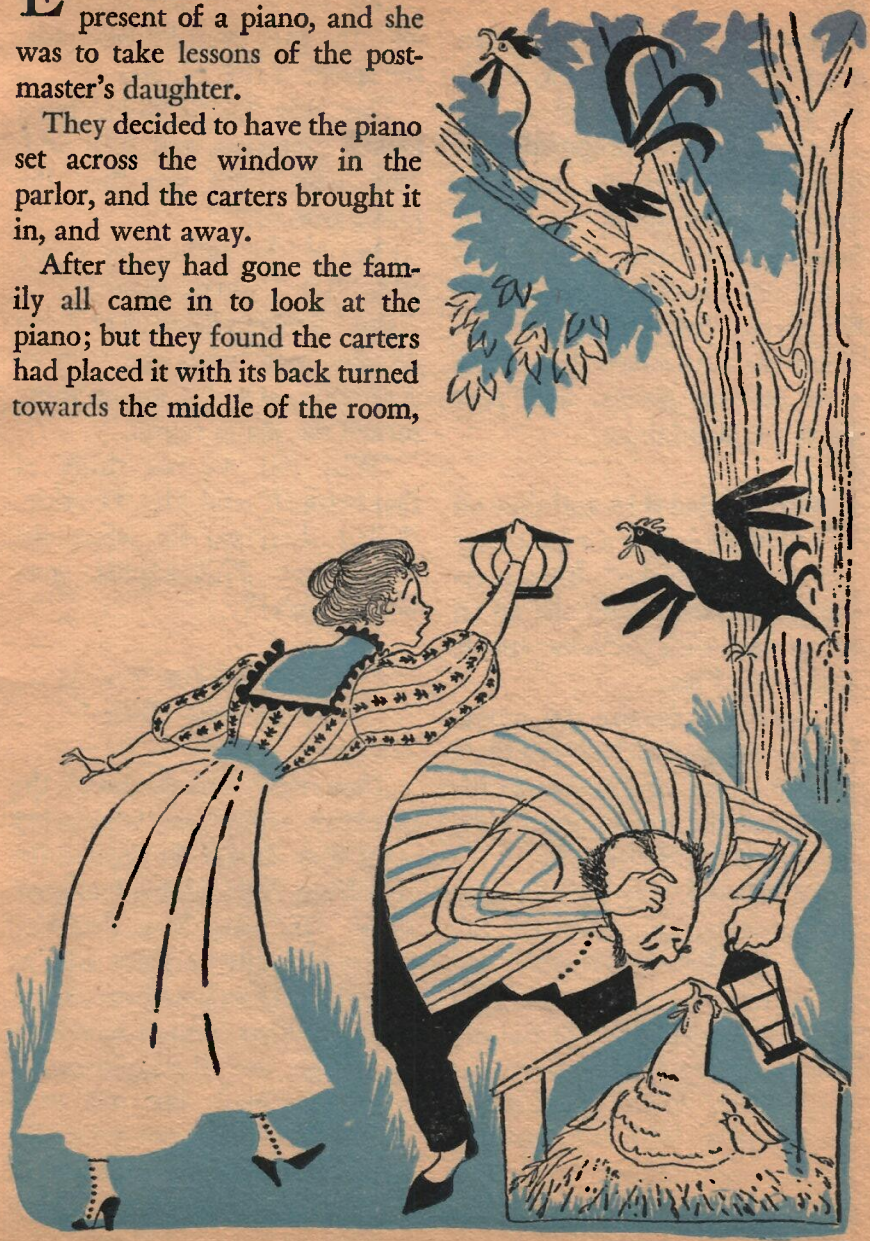
A story by
LUCRETIA P. HALE

They looked everywhere but not a single goose did they find. "Oh, dear," said Mrs. Peterkin in a sad voice. "How disappointing."

ELIZABETH ELIZA had a present of a piano, and she was to take lessons of the postmaster's daughter.

They decided to have the piano set across the window in the parlor, and the carters brought it in, and went away.

After they had gone the family all came in to look at the piano; but they found the carters had placed it with its back turned towards the middle of the room,



From "The Peterkin Papers" by Lucretia P. Hale.

standing close against the window.

How could Elizabeth Eliza open it? How could she reach the keys to play upon it?

Solomon John proposed that they should open the window, which Agamemnon could do with his long arms. Then Elizabeth Eliza should go round upon the piazza, and open the piano. Then she could have her music stool on the piazza, and play upon the piano there.

SO they tried this; and they all thought it was a very pretty sight to see Elizabeth Eliza playing on the piano while she sat on the piazza, with the honeysuckle vine behind her.

It was very pleasant, too, moonlight evenings. Mr. Peterkin liked to take a doze on his sofa in the room but the rest of the family liked to sit on the piazza.

All this did very well through the summer; but, when the fall came, Mr. Peterkin thought the air was too cold from the open window, and the family did not want to sit out on the piazza.

Elizabeth Eliza practiced in the mornings with her cloak on; but she was obliged to give up her music in the evenings the family shivered so.

One day, when she was talking with the lady from Philadelphia, she spoke of this trouble.

The lady from Philadelphia looked surprised, and then said, "But why don't you turn the piano around?"

One of the little boys pertly said, "It is a square piano."

But Elizabeth Eliza went home directly, and, with the help of Agamemnon and Solomon John, turned the piano round.

"Why did we not think of that before?" said Mrs. Peterkin. "What shall we do when the lady from Philadelphia goes home again?"

The Peterkins Try to Become Wise

They were sitting round the breakfast table, and wondering what they should do because the lady from Philadelphia had gone away. "If," said Mrs. Peterkin, "we could only be more wise as a family!" How could they manage it? Agamemnon had been to college, and the children all went to school; but still as a family they were not wise. "It comes from books," said one of the family. "People who have a

great many books are very wise." Then they counted up that there were very few books in the house — a few school books and Mrs. Peterkin's cook book were all.

"That's the thing!" said Agamemnon. "We want a library."

"We want a library!" said Solomon John. And all of them exclaimed, "We want a library!"

"Let us think how we shall get one," said Mrs. Peterkin. "I have observed that other people think a great deal about thinking."

So they all sat and thought a great while.

Then said Agamemnon, "I will make a library. There are some boards in the wood-shed, and I have a hammer and some nails, and perhaps we can borrow some hinges, and there we have our library!"

They were all very much pleased at the idea.

"That's the bookcase part," said Elizabeth Eliza; "but where are the books?"

So they sat and thought a little while, when Solomon John exclaimed, "I will make a book!"

They all looked at him in wonder and admiration.

Playing through an open window didn't seem to bother her at all.

"Other people," said Mrs. Peterkin, "think a great deal about thinking."

"Yes," said Solomon John, "books will make us wise; but first I must make a book."

SO they went into the parlor, and sat down to make a book. But there was no ink. What should he do for ink? Elizabeth Eliza said she had heard that nutgalls and vinegar made very good ink. So they decided to make some. The little boys said they could find some nutgalls up in the woods. So they all agreed to set out and pick some.

The nutgalls were hard to find. There was almost everything else in the woods, — chestnuts and walnuts and small hazel-nuts, and a great many squirrels; and they had to walk a great way before they found any nutgalls. At last they came home with a large basket and two nutgalls in it. Then came the question of the vinegar. Mrs. Peterkin had used her very last on some beets they had the day before. "Suppose we go and ask the minister's wife," said Elizabeth Eliza. So they all went to the minister's wife. She said if they wanted some good vinegar they had better set a barrel of cider down in the cellar and in a year or two it would make very nice vinegar. But they said they wanted it that very afternoon. When the minister's wife heard this she said she should be very glad to let them have some vinegar, and gave them a cupful to carry home.

So they stirred in some nutgalls, and by the time evening came round they had a large

supply of very good ink.

Then Solomon John wanted a pen. Agamemnon had a steel one, but Solomon John said, "Poets always used quills." Elizabeth Eliza suggested that they should get a quill. But it was already dark. They had, however, two lanterns, and the little boys borrowed the neighbors'. They set out in procession for the poultry yard. When they got there the fowls were all at roost, so they could look at them quietly. But there were no geese! There were Shanghais, and Cochin-Chinas, and Guinea hens, and Barbary hens, and speckled hens, and Poland roosters, and bantams, and ducks, and turkeys, but not one goose. "No geese but ourselves," said Mrs. Peterkin, wittily, as they returned to the house. The sight of this procession roused up the village. "A torch-light procession!" cried all the boys of the town; and they gathered round the house, shouting for the flag; and Mr. Peterkin had to invite them in, and give them cider and gingerbread, before he could explain to them that it was only his family visiting his hens.

After the crowd had dispersed Solomon John sat down to think of his writing again. Agamemnon agreed to go over to the bookstore to get a quill. They all went over with him. The bookseller was just shutting up his shop. However, he agreed to go in and get a quill. Then they hurried.

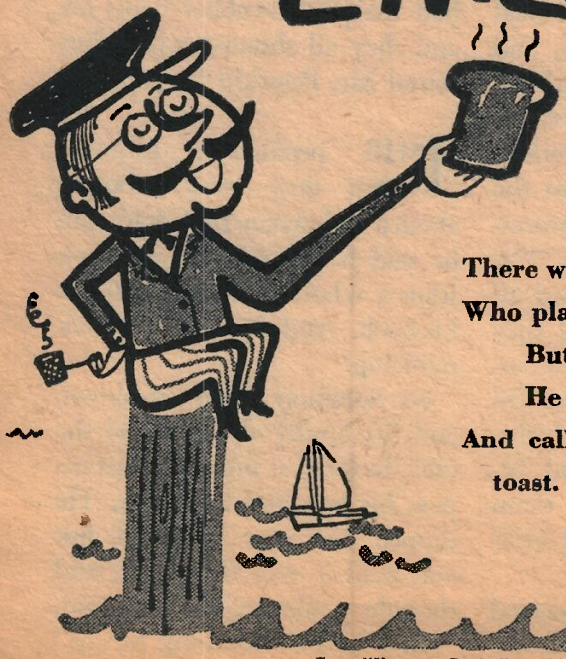
So Solomon John sat down again, but there was no paper. And now the bookstore was shut up. Mr. Peterkin suggested that the mail was about in, and perhaps he should have a letter, and then they could use the envelope to write upon. So they all went to the post-office, and the little boys had their india-rubber boots on, and they all shouted when they found Mr. Peterkin had a letter.

THE postmaster inquired what they were shouting about; and when they told him he said he would give Solomon John a whole sheet of paper for his book. And they all went back rejoicing.

So Solomon John sat down, and the family all sat round the table looking at him. He had his pen, his ink, and his paper. He dipped his pen into the ink and held it over the paper, and thought a minute, and then said, "But I haven't anything to say."

There was a Young Lady whose chin
Resembled the point of a pin;
So she had it made sharp,
And purchased a harp,
And played several tunes with her chin.

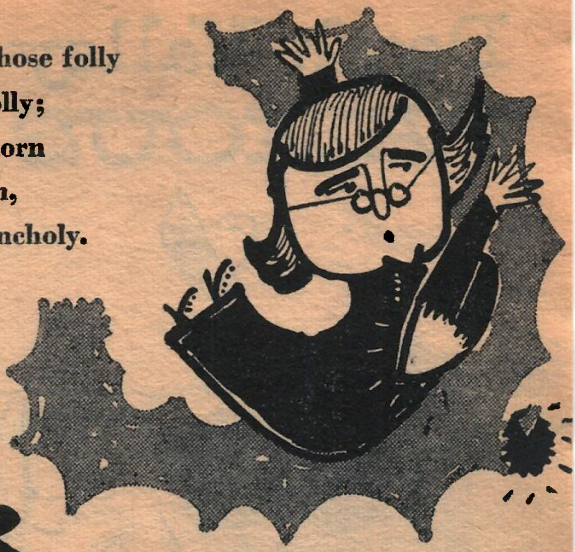
LIMERICKS



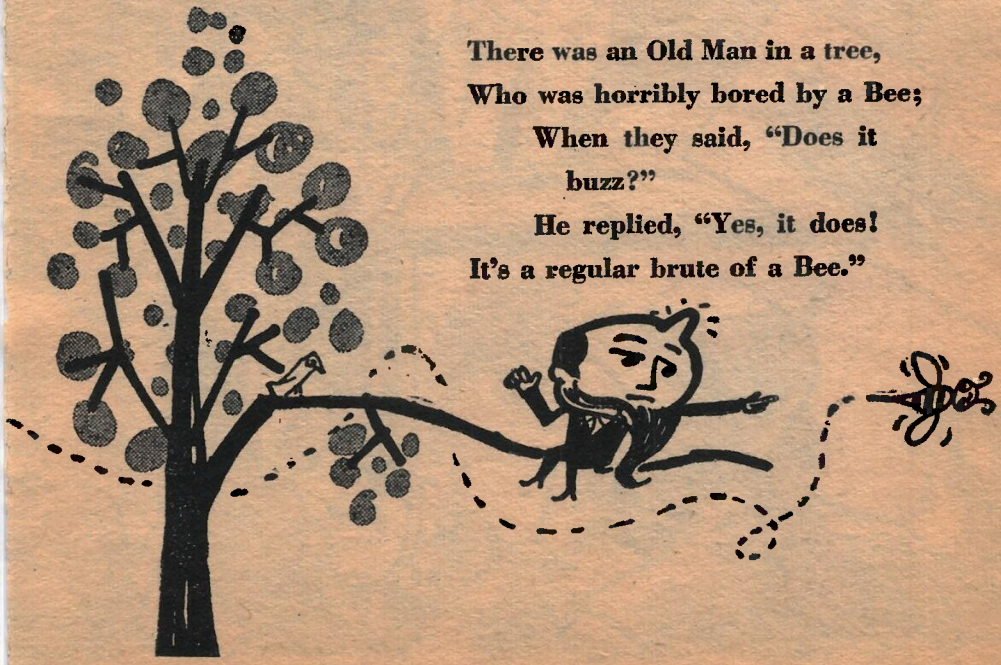
There was an Old Man of the Coast,
Who placidly sat on a post;
But when it was cold
He relinquished his hold,
And called for some hot buttered toast.

From "Nonsense Books," by Edward Lear.

There was an Old Lady whose folly
Induced her to sit in a holly;
Whereupon by a thorn
Her dress being torn,
She quickly became melancholy.



BY LEAR



There was an Old Man in a tree,
Who was horribly bored by a Bee;
When they said, "Does it
buzz?"
He replied, "Yes, it does!
It's a regular brute of a Bee."

Death Valley Scotty's FAMOUS RIDE

32 *Scotty made a short farewell speech to the cheering onlookers.*

By DAVID MORGAN

Here is an exciting story about one of the most amazing exploits in railroad history. So all aboard for a thrilling true adventure on rails!

THE stranger who strolled into the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe's Los Angeles office that day in 1905 looked like a cowboy on his first visit to the city. He wore high-heeled boots, a cheap suit, a blue shirt and a red tie. And, of course, a ten-gallon hat.

But Walter Scott was no cowboy.

He walked right into the chief passenger agent's office, threw his hat into a corner, and said quietly, "I've been thinking of taking a train over your road to Chicago. I want you to put me there in forty-six hours. Kin you do it?"

Forty-six hours! The railroad man was amazed. Chicago was 2265 miles away. Nobody had ever dreamed of getting there in forty-six hours. Why that was half a day faster than the fastest run the railroad had ever made along this route.

From "True Adventures of Railroaders," © 1954 by David Morgan, pub. by Little, Brown & Co.

Illustrations by ERNIE SCHROEDER

The agent gasped when he saw Scotty pull a wad of bills from his pocket.

"Man, do you realize that half the road is over mountain divisions?" said the Santa Fe agent.

Death Valley Scotty was not interested in excuses. He pulled out a wad of thousand-dollar bills and said sharply, "Kin you do it for me, or can't you? Let's talk business!"

The agent began to figure with a pencil. The Santa Fe main line to Chicago crossed several mountain ranges, each of them over seven thousand feet above sea level. It crossed the desert, bridged rivers, wound through canyons. It was better than one thousand miles from Los Angeles to where a train reached prairie country and could really run fast. The agent frowned, but kept on jotting down figures. Finally he gave Scotty the bill: $5500! The miner — for that is what Walter Scott was, though his big money came from a millionaire friend — passed the cash across the desk.

"Young man," said the agent, "the Santa Fe will put you into Chicago in forty-six hours, if steam and steel will hold together. . . . But let me tell you that you'll be riding faster than a white man ever rode before!"

"Pardner," said Scotty, "I like your talk. It sounds good to me. Line 'em up all along the way and tell 'em we're coming."

They called Scotty's train the Coyote Special. It was just three cars long — a baggage car, a diner and the Pullman observa-

tion Muskegon. Next day — Sunday, July 9, 1905 — it was ready to go. By that time everyone in the United States who read a newspaper knew about the fantastic excursion. Editors had splashed the news in big, black headlines: some daredevil California miner had hired a railroad train to rush him to Chicago in forty-six hours! Just for the fun of it, too!

Hundreds of people thronged the La Grande Station in Los Angeles to bid Scotty farewell. A few minutes before one o'clock in the afternoon, a big car stopped before the depot and Scotty got out. He pushed through the cheering crowd, climbed into the cab of the locomotive, and said hello to the engineer and fireman. Then he climbed on the tender and said a few words to the onlookers.

Inside the train he was joined by the Special's three other passengers: his young pretty wife, a newspaperman and a Santa Fe publicity writer.

At last it was one o'clock on the nose. The conductor raised his arm, two blasts came from the Ten-Wheeler's whistle, and the Coyote Special was off. Scotty waved at the crowd as the train hurried out of the city. Up in the cab Engineer John Finlay inched the throttle back and held the whistle cord down. The three-car train leaped ahead — forty-five, fifty, fifty-five miles an hour. A mile a minute. Then seventy, seventy-five, eighty miles an hour!

Suddenly the brakes went on. Looking ahead, the passengers could see the fireman climb back over the swaying tender with a hose in his hand. The terrific speed had overheated the end of an axle, causing a hotbox. He sprayed cold water on the hot steel until it was safe to resume speed. The train roared on.

IN San Bernardino the train ground to a stop, and a helper locomotive was coupled on ahead of Finlay's engine. Ahead was the first of the many mountain ranges they would have to cross. Some twenty-five crooked, climbing miles up in those bleak rocks lay Cajon Pass. The two engines started up, their stacks sending great columns of smoke into the air. Two engines and three cars squealed around one curve after another. At the top — Summit is the name of the lonely station there — the train

didn't even stop to lose its helper engine. A brakeman crawled down between the swaying, rocking locomotives and pulled up the coupling pin. Once free, the helper engine raced ahead to an open switch and into a side track. Another man quickly threw the switch and the Coyote Special roared past on the main line. Valuable minutes had been saved.

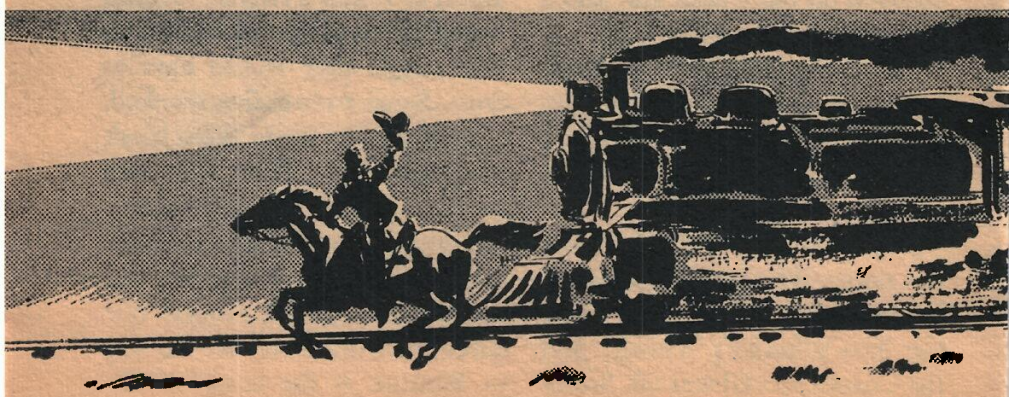
But Finlay had only begun to show Scotty what sort of railroad man he was. It was all downhill from Summit to Barstow. It took icy nerves for the daring engineer to keep his hand off the airbrake valve. There were curves all the way. If Finlay misjudged his speed on any one of them, the Special would be strewn along the right of way in a twisted, burning mass of wood and steel wreckage.

But Finlay was not a man to misjudge. He ran not more than sixty miles an hour where the track coiled like a snake. But where it was straight he rolled. The Special covered one mile in thirty-nine seconds — ninety-six miles an hour!

Scotty had paid for speed — and that was what the Santa Fe was giving him.

Engineer John Finlay arrived in Barstow just twenty-six minutes ahead of the "impossible" schedule which the railroad expected its men to keep.

At Barstow a new crew and a fresh engine were waiting to race Scotty on. The train roared over the desert under the glare of the late afternoon sun. To



With two sharp blasts of its whistle the Coyote Special was off

the occasional Indian or cowboy who watched it pass, the Coyote Special was just a black smudge in the distance, then a blur of engine and cars, finally a trail of dust. That was all.

The Special hurtled down into the Colorado River Basin and came into Needles at 7:17 in the evening. Quickly switchmen stepped in and uncoupled the engine; immediately a fresh locomotive took its place. Within eighty seconds the train was hammering eastward behind No. 1010, a sleek, shiny four-cylinder compound which was the pride of the system.

BACK in the dining car there was excellent food for the four passengers: porterhouse steak, stuffed tomatoes, broiled squab, ice cream and coffee.

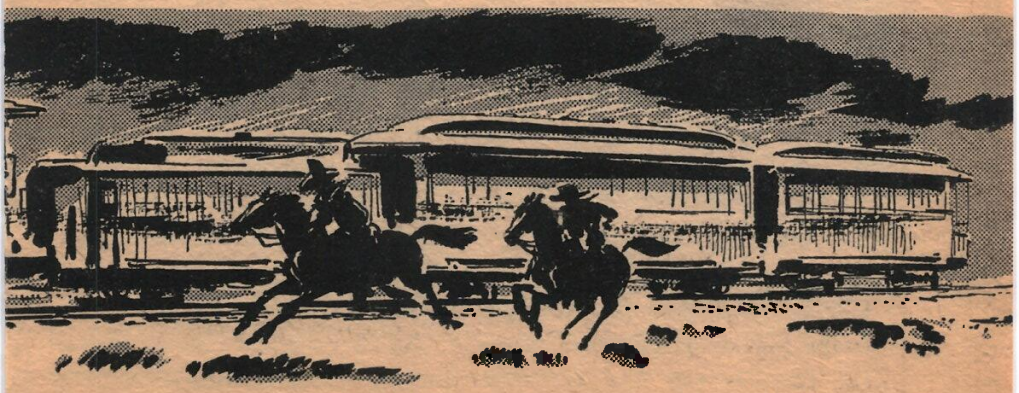
But who could eat?

Engineer Fred Jackson had the train rolling so fast that the salt shakers, as one passenger said, were "playing ping-pong with each other." Three miles away from Needles the train hit a rough spot in the track, jumped and jarred, reeled drunkenly — but stayed on the rails. In the dining car all of the food, plates, cups, glasses and silverware went crashing to the floor.

The conductor smiled.

"Jackson don't know a curve when he sees one," he said. "The whole road looks straight to him."

After that Scotty, his wife and the writers forgot about dinner. It was all they could do to keep from being thrown into the aisle



on its fabulous journey. Soon it was streaking through the wide open country.

too. The train roared across the high steel bridge over the Colorado River at fifty miles an hour. Now they were in Arizona.

The passengers had an easy time of it compared with the three men up in the cab of the locomotive. The high-drivered No. 1010 rolled and tossed like a ship in stormy seas. If a man left his seat, he was apt to be pitched out of the cab.

Trouble developed. The injectors, which pumped water into the boiler, refused to work. Without closing the throttle, Jackson crawled around the back end of the boiler several times during that wild three-hour ride across the desert. Each time he would repair the injector. Each time it would begin shaking apart again a few minutes later from the awful pounding of the engine.

The Coyote Special steamed into Seligman, Arizona, where Superintendent Gibson walked into the Pullman car and lightheartedly asked, "What detained you? Where've you been?"

THE train sped on through the night. It climbed up to 7335 feet to top the Arizona Divide. It came down the other side, wriggled through the curves, tore on through Williams and Winslow and Gallup. Everywhere there were crowds on hand to watch the Special slam past. But there was no time for speeches or handshaking. The Special stopped only to change engines and crews or to take on water. Once there was a hot box on the diner, but it was quickly doused with water.

On and on the Special rolled. Each engineer made the fastest time he could, using his brake only to keep the train on the rails. Scotty's special was running ahead of time — and the Santa Fe meant to keep it that way.

The Continental Divide was crossed at 7248 feet above sea level.

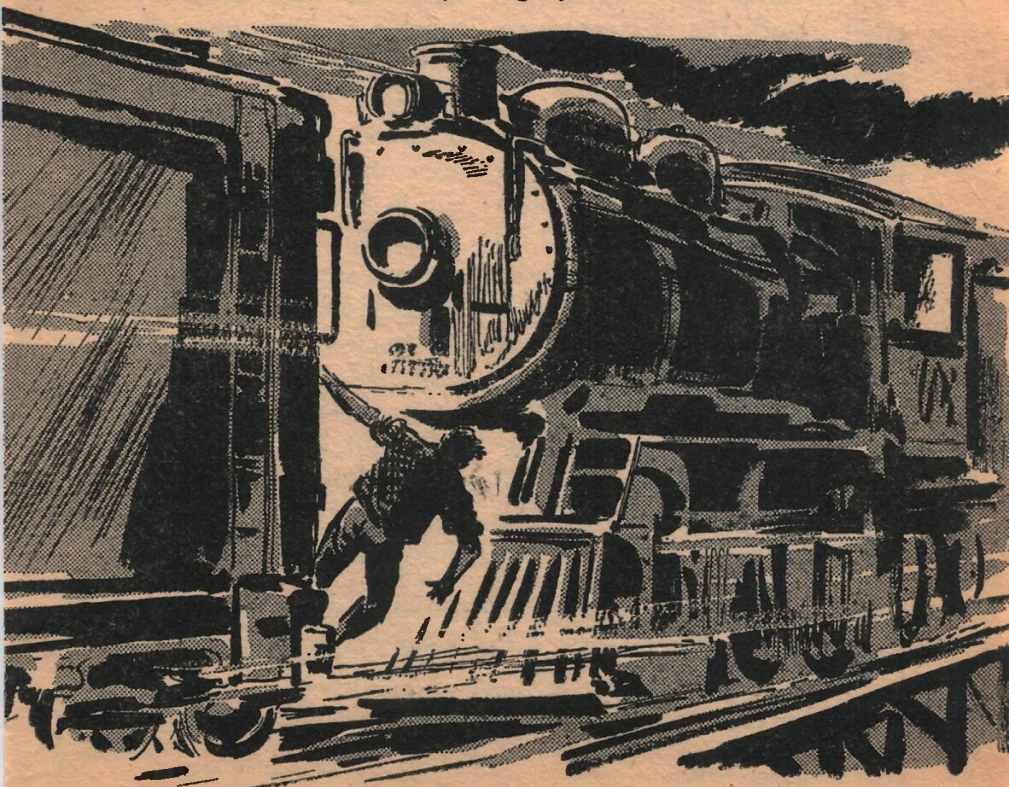
At 9:30 the next morning the train stood in Albuquerque, New Mexico. It had rolled 888 miles from Los Angeles. But it was not yet halfway to Chicago. It was not yet out of the mountains.

Trainmaster Jim Kurn boarded the train and said to Scotty, "Here's where you get a touch of real mountain railroading!"

All that day the Coyote Special fought the mountains with everything that good engineers and

big locomotives could throw at them. Out of Lamay a helper engine coupled on to doublehead the train up through narrow Apache Canyon to the summit of Glorieta Pass at 7437 feet. After that Engineer Ed Sears ran hard and fast all the way into Las Vegas.

By 5:13 that afternoon the train was into La Junta, Colorado, and the prairies stretched away toward the east. The Coyote Special roared out of Colorado and across the plains of Kansas, racing at hurricane speed. Night fell and the engine's headlight began to glow — a streak of yellow down the straight railroad ahead. In its light, ties and telephone poles and wayside stations raced up to meet the train, then as quickly fell behind in the darkness. The train rolled on at sixty, seventy, eighty miles an hour.



The brakeman climbed down between the swaying, rocking locomotives.

At Dodge City, Scotty climbed off to send a telegram to President Theodore Roosevelt:

AN AMERICAN COWBOY IS COMING EAST ON A SPECIAL TRAIN FASTER THAN ANY COWPUNCHER EVER RODE BEFORE. HOW MUCH SHALL I BREAK TRANSCONTINENTAL RECORD?

The Special whipped through Kansas City before dawn, and by eight o'clock the next morning was rumbling over the Mississippi River.

Out of Fort Madison, Iowa, a new Atlantic-type passenger locomotive pulled the train. The engine, No. 510, was what railroaders called a balanced compound — it had four cylinders instead of just two as most steam engines do — and its wheels were six feet seven inches tall!

With the 510 up front, the Special flew. Engineer C. Losee kept building up speed until he hit 106 miles an hour! It was the fastest that any Santa Fe train had ever traveled! The Special had broken all records.

At 11:54 A.M. that same morning — July 11, 1905 — the train stopped in Dearborn Station, Chicago. The Santa Fe had promised Death Valley Scotty to cover the 2265 miles in forty-six hours. But the train had cut that to forty-four hours, fifty-four minutes! That was more than fourteen hours faster than any other train had ever gone over the Santa Fe from Los Angeles to Chicago. Across the country thousands of people who had been reading about the fabulous run in their newspapers cheered when they heard about Scotty's safe arrival.

Scotty loved speed. But even he seemed satisfied to take it easy for a while. He and his wife returned to Death Valley and California aboard a regular train on the Santa Fe. It ran slowly, but in its dining car the dishes stayed on the table.

CHILDREN'S DIGEST GOES TO SCHOOL, TOO!

Why not show your copy of CHILDREN'S DIGEST to your teacher? She will love it, and be glad to know that all your classmates can receive each wonderful issue of good reading and good times under our School Plan. We will tell her about it now if she writes: School Dept., Box C12-6E, Parents' Magazine Press, Inc., 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York 17, N. Y.

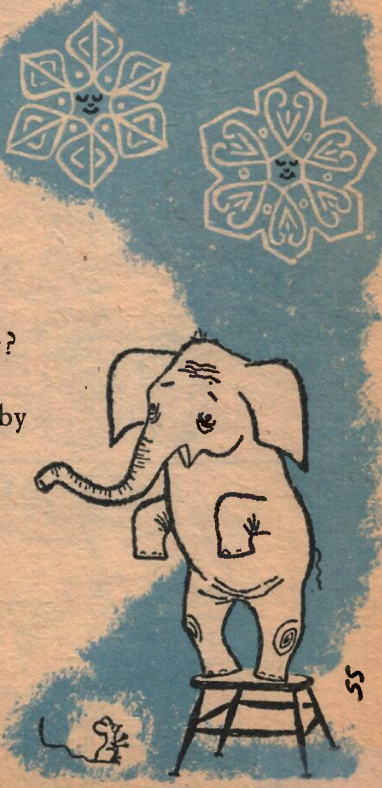
DO YOU BELIEVE IT?

Here are some common beliefs most of us have heard about. Which do you think true, which false?

Answers on page 122

DO YOU BELIEVE . . .

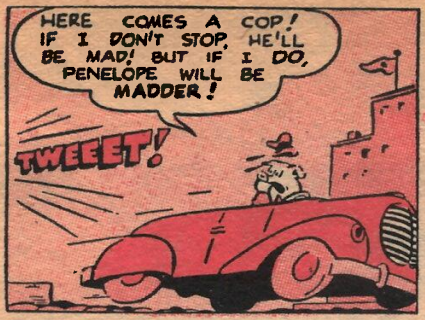
1. That lightning never strikes twice in the same place?
2. That bats are blind?
3. That it never rains in the Sahara?
4. That there are no fish in the Dead Sea?
5. That a wet, cold nose marks a healthy dog?
6. That the age of a rattlesnake can be told by the number of rattles on its tail?
7. That dew falls?
8. That no two snowflakes are alike?
9. That elephants are afraid of mice?
10. That a mirage is a product of the imagination?

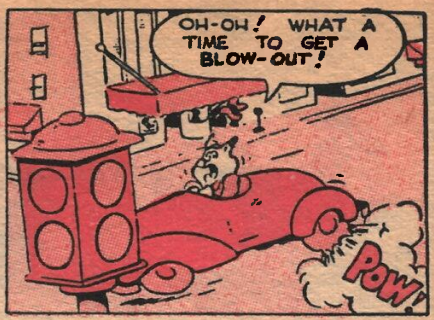


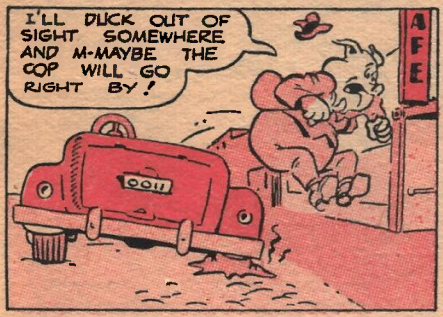
From "60 Snappy Quizzes," © 1949 by Hart Publishing Co.

PERCY PIG
in
"A CLOSE SHAVE"
I'D BETTER STEP ON THE GAS OR I'LL BE LATE FOR MY DATE WITH PENELOPE!
CRASH!
YEEOW! I'M FLYING BLIND!
THAT GUY JUST CRASHED INTO MY FRUIT STAND, OFFICER!
DON'T WORRY, TONY! I'LL GET HIM!

Reprinted from "Dizzy Duck" No. 39, copyright 1952 by Animated Cartoons, Inc.


HERE COMES A COP! IF I DON'T STOP, HE'LL BE MAD! BUT IF I DO, PENELOPE WILL BE MADDER!
TWEEET!


OH-OH! WHAT A TIME TO GET A BLOW-OUT!
POW!


I'LL DUCK OUT OF SIGHT SOMEWHERE AND M-MAYBE THE COP WILL GO RIGHT BY!
AFE

OUT TO LUNCH BACK IN AN HOUR
BARBER SHOP

HMM... THIS LOOKS LIKE THE CAR THAT DID THE DAMAGE! I'LL INVESTIGATE!

HE'S HEADING THIS WAY! WHAT'LL I DO?
ARBER
OP

THIS BARBER'S JACKET IS MY ONLY CHANCE!

HEY! DID YOU SEE THE OWNER OF THAT JALOPY RUN PAST JUST NOW?
N-NO SIR, YOUR HONOR! I HAVEN'T SEEN A SOUL!

I'LL STAY HERE AND WAIT FOR HIM... AND MEANWHILE YOU CAN GIVE ME A SHAVE!
M-ME? SHAVE YOU?
YOU'RE THE BARBER, AREN'T YOU? DID YOU EXPECT ME TO SEND FOR A PLUMBER?
N-NO, SIR! P-PLEASE SIT DOWN!
GEE! I WONDER HOW I GET THIS THING TO TILT?
CLICK!
HALLLPP!
WRONG BUTTON!
YEEOW!
MAYBE THIS WILL STOP IT!
CRASH!
DON'T WORRY, OFFICER! I'LL GET YOU DOWN!
OMIGOSH! HE'S WEDGED IN THE CEILING!

I'D BETTER LEND MY WEIGHT TO THIS PROBLEM BEFORE HE FLIPS HIS WIG!
WHOMP!
THAT'S HIM, OFFICER! HE'S THE ONE WHO WRECKED MY FRUIT STAND!
SO!
GULP!... SMALL WORLD, ISN'T IT?
LET'S GO, BUB! YOU'VE GOT A DATE WITH THE JUDGE!
YOU'RE WRONG! I'VE GOT A DATE WITH PENELOPE!
HEY! COME BACK!
R-RIP!
AUTOMATIC LATHER DISPENSER
SPLURCH!
YOU'RE WORKING YOURSELF INTO A LATHER, OFFICER!

NOW IF I CAN MAKE THE DOOR, I'LL BE SAFE!
Yiiii!
PLONK
HOT TOWELS
HALP! I'M BURNING UP!
HOT TOWEL
CLANG! CLANG!
POLICE PATROL
FOR SMASHING A FRUIT STAND, RESISTING ARREST AND IMPERSONATING A BARBER WITHOUT A LICENSE, I SENTENCE YOU TO THREE MONTHS IN JAIL!
AUNT PENELOPE SENT DOWN YOUR KIT, UNCLE PERCY! SHE THOUGHT A NICE SHAVE WOULD CHEER YOU UP!
CHUCK IT INTO THE RIVER, ETHELBERT! I'M OFF SHAVING FOR LIFE!

AN ALBUM OF
Christmas Folk Songs

By RUTH CRAWFORD SEEGER

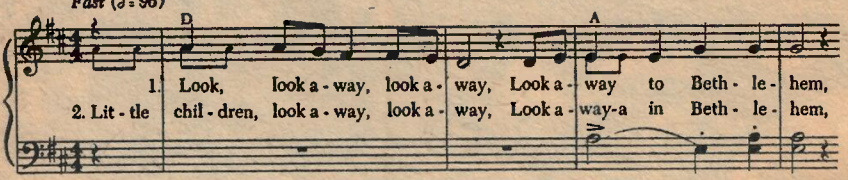
Illustrated by BARBARA COONEY

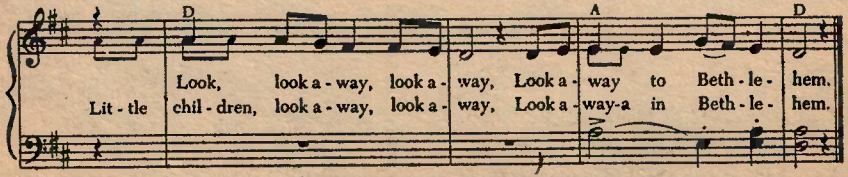
Nobody knows how a folk song is born. Many of them are hundreds of years old. Yet they seem to live forever. Here are some beautiful Christmas folk songs that celebrate this most holy and joyous of seasons.

From "American Folk Songs for Christmas" by Ruth Crawford Seeger, pub. by Doubleday & Co., Inc.

Look Away to Bethlehem

Fast (♩ = 96)





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Don't You Hear the Lambs a-Crying?

Moderate ♩=72

RÉFRAIN

TEXAS

C F

Don't you hear the lambs a - cry - ing, on the oth - er green shore?

smooth

F C G C *Fine*

Don't you hear the lambs a - cry - ing, O Good Shep-herd, go feed-a my sheep.

STANZA

C G C G C G C

Some for Paul and some for Si - las, Some for to make-a my heart re - joice,

D. C. without pause

C G C G C G C

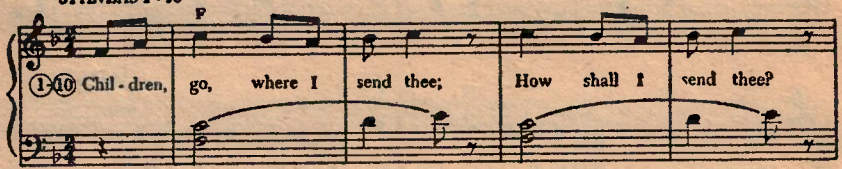
Don't you hear the lambs a - cry - ing, O Good Shep-herd, go feed-a my sheep.

By permission of Charles Seeger.

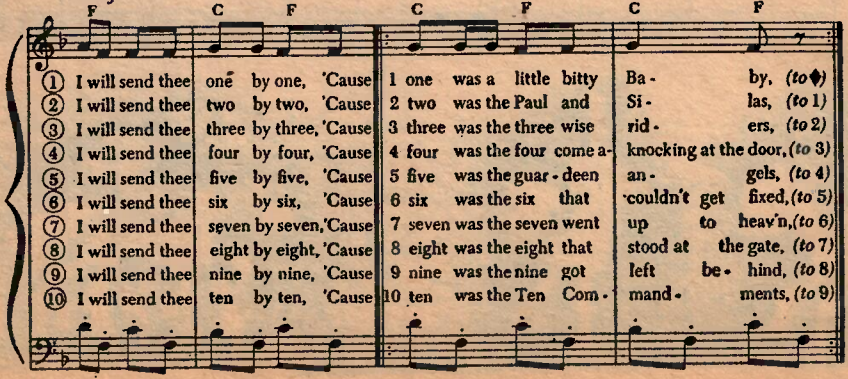
Little Bitty Baby

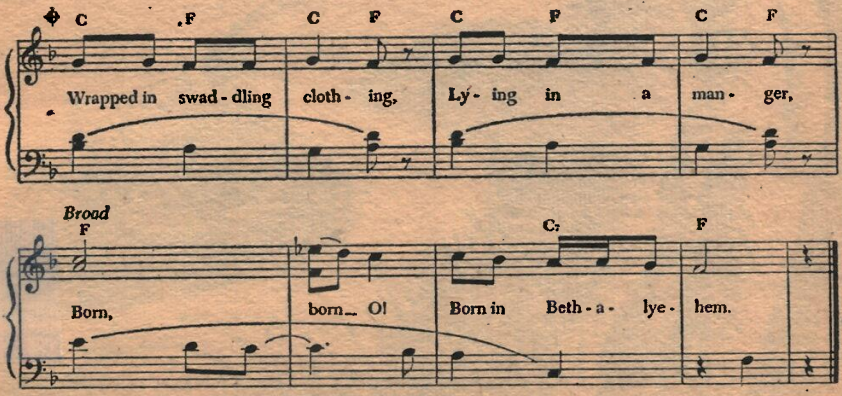
Moderate (♩ = 96)
STANZAS 1 - 10

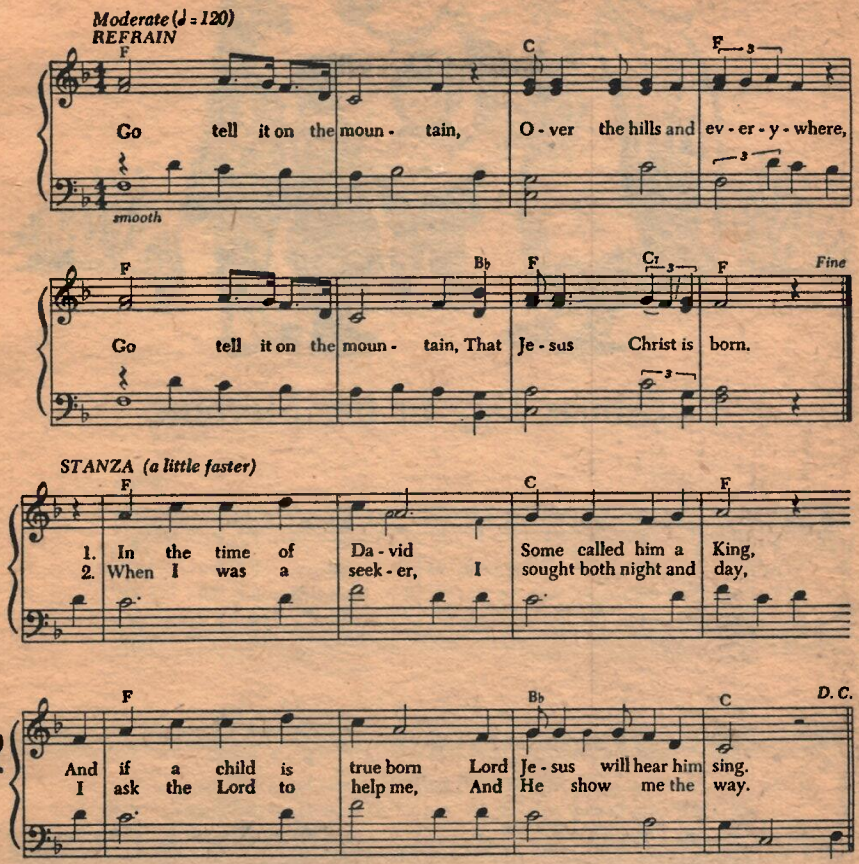
KENTUCKY



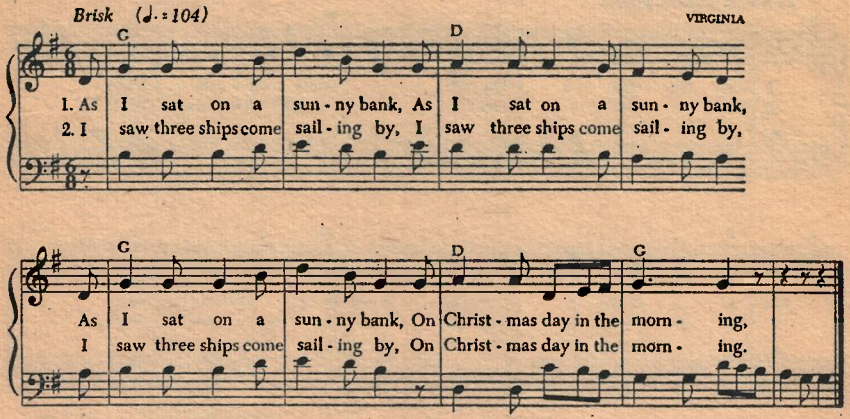
Lively


F C F C F C F
1 I will send thee one by one, 'Cause 1 one was a little bitty Ba - by, (to ♦)
2 I will send thee two by two, 'Cause 2 two was the Paul and Si - las, (to 1)
3 I will send thee three by three, 'Cause 3 three was the three wise rid - ers, (to 2)
4 I will send thee four by four, 'Cause 4 four was the four come a- knocking at the door, (to 3)
5 I will send thee five by five, 'Cause 5 five was the guar - deen an - gels, (to 4)
6 I will send thee six by six, 'Cause 6 six was the six that couldn't get fixed, (to 5)
7 I will send thee seven by seven, 'Cause 7 seven was the seven went up to heav'n, (to 6)
8 I will send thee eight by eight, 'Cause 8 eight was the eight that stood at the gate, (to 7)
9 I will send thee nine by nine, 'Cause 9 nine was the nine got left be - hind, (to 8)
10 I will send thee ten by ten, 'Cause 10 ten was the Ten Com - mand - ments, (to 9)

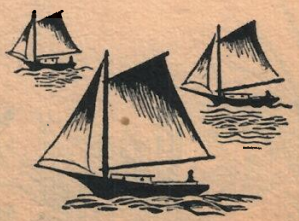
A CUMULATIVE SONG

From "The Swapping Song Book" by Jean Ritchie, pub. by Oxford University Press.

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Moderate (♩ = 120)
REFRAIN
F
C
F
Go tell it on the moun - tain, O - ver the hills and ev - er - y - where,
smooth
F
B♭
F
C7
F
Fine
Go tell it on the moun - tain, That Je - sus Christ is born.
STANZA (a little faster)
F
C
F
1. In the time of Da - vid Some called him a King,
2. When I was a seek - er, I sought both night and day,
F
B♭
C
D.C.
And if a child is true born Lord Je - sus will hear him sing.
I ask the Lord to help me, And He show me the way.

3. He made me a watchman
Upon a city wall,
And if I am a Christian
I am the least of all.

Christmas Day in the Morning

Brisk (♩.=104)
VIRGINIA
C
D
1. As I sat on a sun - ny bank, As I sat on a sun - ny bank,
2. I saw three ships come sail - ing by, I saw three ships come sail - ing by,
C
D
G
As I sat on a sun - ny bank, On Christ - mas day in the morn - ing,
I saw three ships come sail - ing by, On Christ - mas day in the morn - ing.

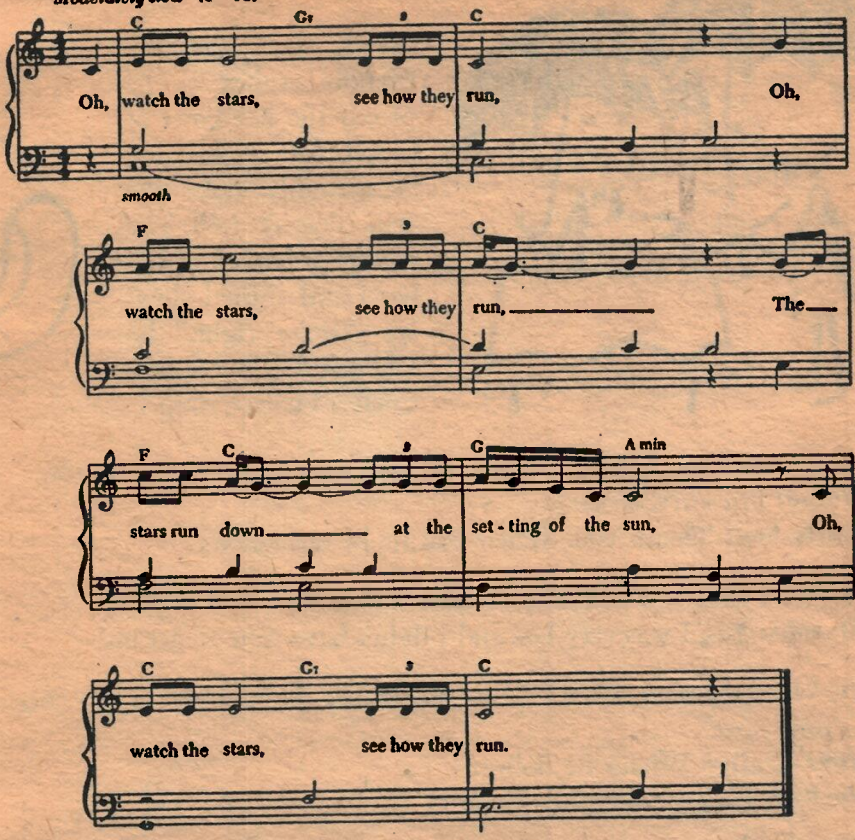
3. And who do you think was in those three ships, (3)
   But Joseph and his fair lady.
4. Then he did whistle and she did sing, (3)
   On Christmas Day in the morning.
5. And all the bells on earth did ring.
6. And all the angels in heaven did sing.
7. For the joy of the new-born King.
8. Then let us all rejoice again.



From "Down East Spirituals" by Geo. P. Jackson, pub. by J. J. Augustin, Inc. N. Y.

Oh, Watch the Stars

Moderately slow (♩ = 84)

SOUTH CAROLINA

From "St. Helena Island Spirituals," by permission of Penn Community Services, Inc.

HAVE YOU

"Well, sir," said the friendly waiter as he placed the hot bowl of soup before a customer, "it certainly looks like rain, doesn't it?" The customer looked at the bowl and sniffed slowly. "You're right," he said grimly, "but it does smell a bit like soup."

Little boy: I'm calling to make an appointment with the doctor.
Nurse: I'm sorry, he's out.
Little boy: Thank you. When will he be out again?

Herb: I saw you running to class alongside your bicycle.
Harold: Yes, I was very late and I didn't have time to get on!

Jack: Remember Dick? You should see him. He's in the big time now.
Joe: Really? What's he doing?
Jack: Selling grandfather clocks!

Sally: Mother, look at that man. He hasn't a hair on his head!
Mother: Sh-h-h! He might hear you.
Sally: Oh, doesn't he know?

Teacher: Johnny, what is the plural of hippopotamus?
Johnny: *Who* would want two of *those?*

HEARD THESE?

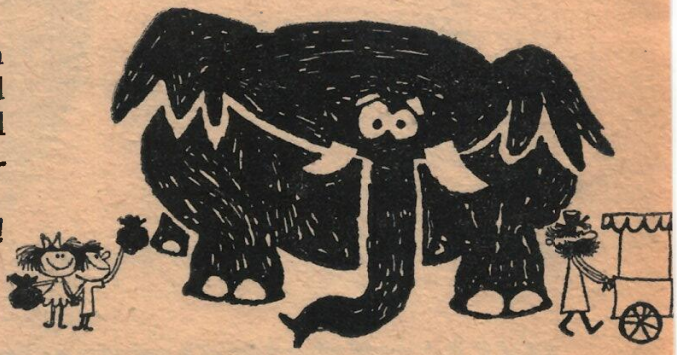
Mrs. White: I hear your son is an author. Does he write for money?
Mrs. Wright: Yes, in every letter he sends.

Tommy: That man wasn't a painless dentist after all.
Dad: Why, did he hurt you?
Tommy: No, but he yelled just like any other dentist when I bit his thumb!

Hunter: Look, there's a tiger over there! Is he safe?
Guide: He's a lot safer than you are!

Judge: Did you steal that purse?
Prisoner: Yes, your honor. You see, I wasn't feeling well and I thought the *change* would do me good.

Frank: My sister's in the first grade and already she can spell her name backwards.
Fran: How smart! What's her name?
Frank: Anna.



Fred: I saw a doctor today about my lapses of memory.
Ted: What did he do?
Fred: He insisted that I pay my bill in advance!

Ken: Have a peanut?
Kate: No, they're fattening.
Ken: How do you know?
Kate: Did you ever see a skinny elephant?

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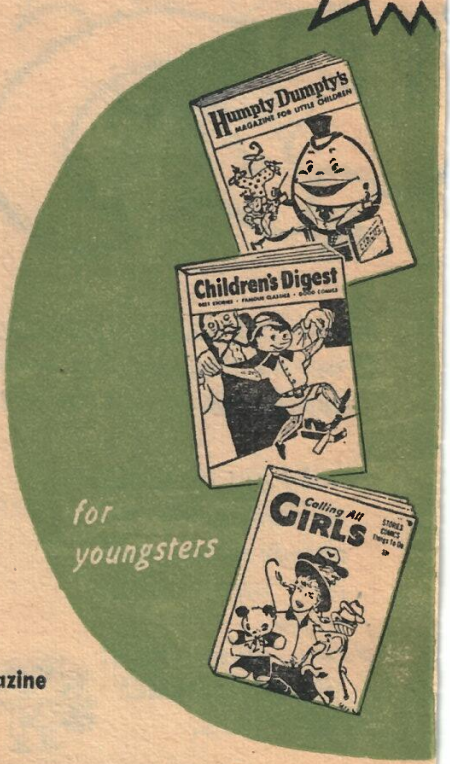

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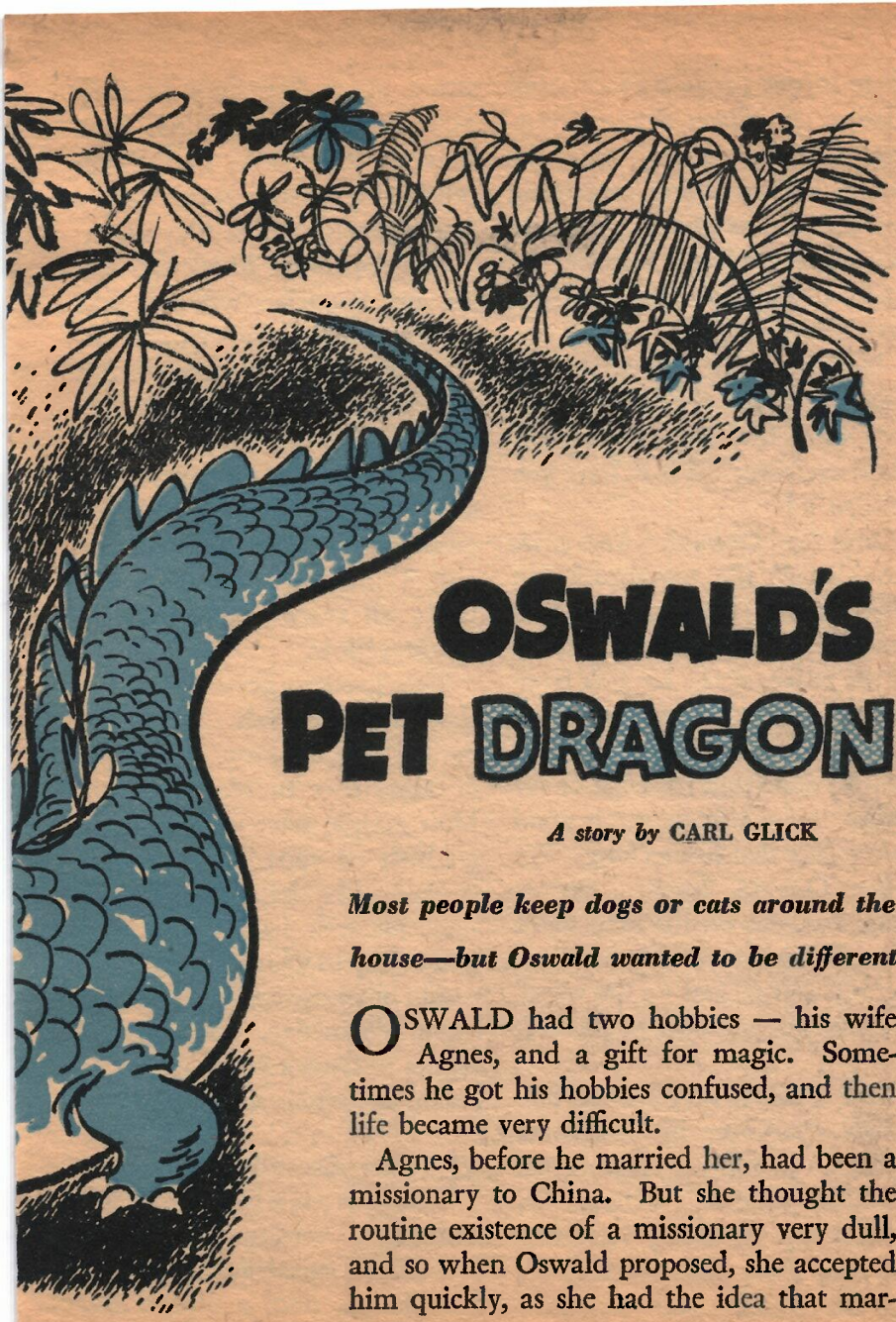


OSWALD'S PET DRAGON

A story by CARL GLICK

Most people keep dogs or cats around the house—but Oswald wanted to be different

OSWALD had two hobbies — his wife Agnes, and a gift for magic. Sometimes he got his hobbies confused, and then life became very difficult.

Agnes, before he married her, had been a missionary to China. But she thought the routine existence of a missionary very dull, and so when Oswald proposed, she accepted him quickly, as she had the idea that mar-

From "Oswald's Pet Dragon" by Carl Glick, © 1943 by Coward-McCann, Inc.

riage might prove a more stimulating experience than converting Chinese. Then, too, she would still be doing something worthwhile, as Oswald, she felt, needed reforming. You see, she knew all about his gift for magic, and it annoyed her.

Nothing about their apartment was ever where she left it.

"I can't find my toothbrush," she'd exclaim. "Where have you hidden it?"

And then Oswald, with a grin, would pull the toothbrush out from behind her ear. Or he'd pull the hammer out of the leg of the settee, or the ice-pick from behind a picture, or the jar of cold cream she needed for her complexion from the edge of the radio. Now a woman can stand things like that just so long. For when Oswald, being a proper magician, put on his long black robe, his red cap with cabilistic figures, and picked up his wand, there wasn't anything he couldn't do.

One October they moved into a new apartment in Greenwich Village. In moving, Agnes had an idea. She left behind Oswald's bag of tricks, including the long black robe, the red cap, and the wand. And she anticipated much happiness in their new home. She also felt from now on she could find things when she wanted them. She'd know exactly where they were.

But she didn't know Oswald. As any magician will tell you, the black robe, the cap, and the wand are only for show — just something with which to fool the public.

Now the new apartment had a garden at the back, a lovely garden with flowers and one tree, and a little plot of grass and walls, all three sides painted a bright yellow.

The garden gave Oswald a thought. He felt what the garden needed most was a pet of some sort to play about it. Most people have cats or dogs, goldfish or canaries, or simple creatures like that. But Oswald, since his wife had once been a missionary to China, thought she would be pleased with something more distinctive. He wanted Agnes to have a pet that no one else in the whole world had.

So one day when she came home from a meeting of her missionary society where the members, ex-missionaries like herself, met once a month and

His fiery nose was so hot that the coffee pot began to bubble and boil.

OSWALD'S PET DRAGON

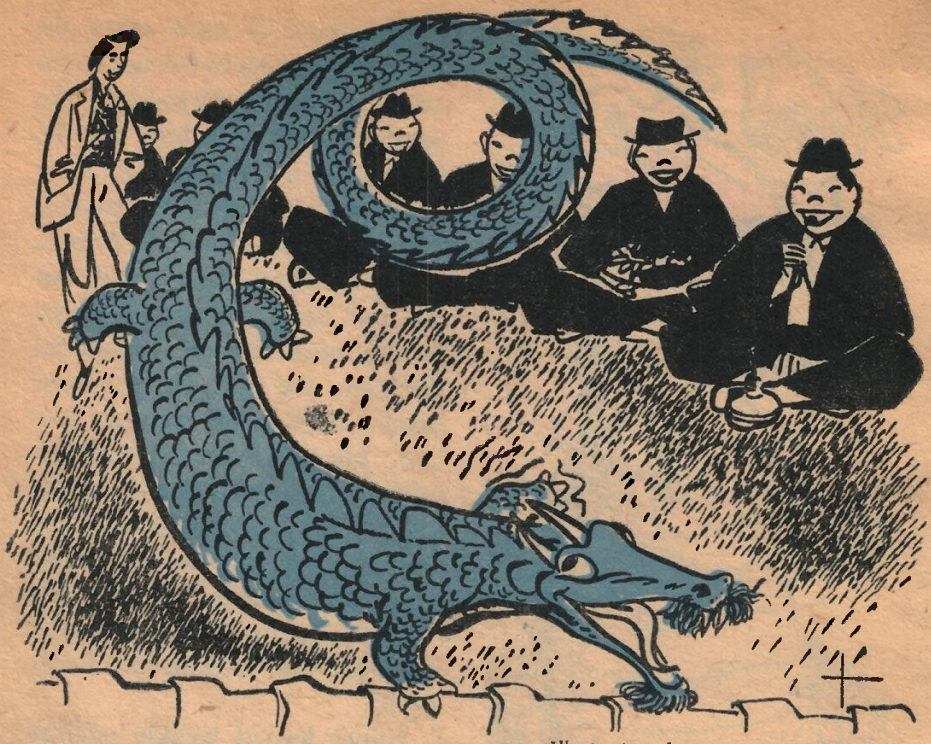
read papers to each other on their experiences in foreign countries, she found Oswald in the garden. And with him was the new pet — a Chinese Dragon.

He was a very nice, playful Dragon, about the size of three large Newfoundland dogs; but all red body with gold claws, which meant he was an Imperial Dragon, the sort an Emperor would have in his summer palace. He could spit fire, too, and just as soon as he saw Agnes in the doorway, he rose on his hind legs and fire and smoke poured from his nostrils. It was his way of purring, like a contented cat. He didn't mean any harm by it.

Agnes leaned weakly against the door. Suddenly she felt of no more importance in the world. And had she been the fainting kind of female, rather than a strong-minded missionary used to the unexpected, she would have collapsed in a heap on the spot.

Instead, she got very angry and sputtered, "Where — how — what?"

"A slight trick of magic," boasted Oswald. "Easy, my dear," and he snapped his fingers airily. "Any licensed magician



Illustrations by EARL OLIVER HURST

The six Chinese laundrymen watched admiringly as the Dragon did his tricks.

can take a rabbit out of anybody's hat. Hats are where all good rabbits hide. The same is true with Chinese Dragons. There's something in every household as common as hats you can always pull a Dragon out of — if you know how, of course."

"What?" she asked, still so flabbergasted she could use only words of one syllable.

"I'll not tell," he said, stubbornly. "A magician is entitled to his secrets. And I didn't need my black robe, my cap, nor my wand, either — which you threw away when we moved here."

Then Agnes knew she'd have to put up with this sort of thing for the rest of her life. But she was determined not to like it.

"Put him back where he came from," she commanded.

At that the Dragon shook all over. Great tears welled up in his bright green eyes. He crawled

humbly to Agnes' feet, and knelt there like a Persian cat, pleading for only a kind word.

"You've hurt his feelings," cried Oswald. "He's very sensitive. Give him your love. Stroke him back of the ears. He likes that."

"I will not!" stormed Agnes. At that moment she didn't even feel like loving Oswald.

Hearing her cross words, the Dragon crept back to Oswald for sympathy. Oswald, to conciliate him, immediately got the coffee pot and placed it on the Dragon's nose. The Dragon, sitting up on his hind legs, blew fire from his nostrils and the coffee pot began to bubble and boil. It was one of his best parlour tricks. And Oswald's thoughtfulness at this critical moment pleased the Dragon very much. He knew Oswald was a friend he could count on through thick and thin.

But Agnes went on inside, slammed the door, and spent the rest of the evening sulking.

"If he wants to stay out there playing with that awful beast instead of sitting here talking to me — he just can," she muttered angrily to herself.

And Oswald did.

The Dragon did all his best stunts for him.

Ran along the top of the garden wall,
turned somersaults,
sat up on his hind legs,
belched fire and smoke,
and snorted with mock rage.

OF course, the neighbors in the apartments across the court saw this strange performance, and it terrified them. They closed their windows tight, and phoned for the police.

Now Officer Murphy when he arrived found Agnes biting her nails in rage in the living-room.

"What's going on here?" he asked.

Agnes could only point to the garden. So Murphy crashed his way out there. Now Murphy, having been born south of Dublin, could tell a tale or two himself about faery spirits that haunt gardens, peep out at passers-by from behind tree trunks, and do uncanny tricks to unbelievers on their own hearthstones.

So when Oswald explained how his wife had once been a missionary to China, and how he himself had a gift for magic, and thinking to please her had pulled a Dragon out of the laun-

dry-bag (there, the secret is out) just as most magicians take rabbits out of hats, he understood how Oswald felt. In fact, he admired the Dragon, never having actually seen one before.

"Of course," he said, scratching his head, "there's a law against keeping animals in the city. A family in the Bronx had a pig in the basement, and a couple on Park Avenue had four chickens in their pent-house. But it's against the law — and they had to give them up."

"But he's not an animal," pleaded Oswald. "He's a pet. There's no law against pets, is there?"

"I'll take it up with the Captain," said Murphy.

Now the Captain's name was Callahan, and he also came from Ireland. So when Oswald gave Murphy a smile and a bit of shamrock he had been saving to wear on next St. Patrick's day, Murphy said he thought Callahan would see eye to eye on the matter.

Well, that's the way things were. That night the Dragon slept in a corner of the garden, all curled up, and very beautiful to behold, a splash of red and gold against the green leaves.

The next day, being Saturday, Agnes went shopping. There were so many things she needed for the new apartment, and she didn't understand why Oswald couldn't have been practical and pulled a new kitchen cabinet from behind the stove, or some picture frame wire from the ice box, instead of a Dragon from the laundry-bag. But men don't see things that way. And all day while she shopped she was mad, and she made the salespeople very unhappy.

WHEN she got back to the apartment late that afternoon, she was madder still. For seated in the garden, admiring the Dragon, were the six Chinese laundrymen from around the neighborhood — Wong, Fong, Chong, Hong, Dong and Mong.

They had put signs in their windows saying, "Be back soon." But they had been in the garden all day, and long lines of angry customers besieged the laundries for their clean shirts and socks for Sunday. But did the Chinese laundrymen care? They did not. They were totally indifferent to the worries of the world as they sat placidly and blandly in the

garden smoking their water pipes and watching the Dragon perform his tricks.

This attention spoiled the Dragon. Such flattery went straight to his head, and when Agnes came into the garden, he jumped onto the wall and blew a blast of hot smoke right down her back.

This made the Chinese laundrymen laugh politely.

But it didn't make Agnes laugh. She ordered Oswald into the house and said to him, "I will not have any Chinese sitting in my garden!"

"But, my dear, I thought being a missionary once, you liked

"Isn't it beautiful," said Agnes. "I brought it back from China with me."

the Chinese," said Oswald in surprise.

"I do!" exclaimed Agnes. "I like them very much, both in China and here in this country. I can even use chopsticks, you know that. I like their dragons, too, but I like them in China, not here in my garden blowing smoke down my back."

BUT he can be very useful," protested Oswald sadly. "Mornings he'll balance the coffee pot on his nose, and it'll be boiling by the time I'm dressed and ready for breakfast. And when winter comes, he'll curl up in the fireplace and blow smoke and flames, and we won't have to buy logs at three for fifty cents."

This was just too much for Agnes. She screamed as loud as she did the time the bandits came to the mission in China, stole all her pink silk underthings, and tied them onto their bayonets as they marched away.

"Either you get rid of that Dragon — or I leave this house, forever," she exclaimed.

So he made no comment, but went into the garden and had a long talk with the Chinese laundrymen and the Dragon. They must have come to a complete understanding. For the next day Agnes discovered over the mantel, where she needed just the right thing, a beautiful tapestry. On it, emblazoned in all his majesty, was a red Chinese Dragon with five gold claws.

She didn't ask Oswald where it came from. She knew. At last he had put his magic to good use. It made Agnes happy.

Oswald is happy, too, these days. For when Agnes isn't home, the Dragon comes down from the tapestry. He boils Oswald's coffee on his nose, plays about the apartment, and the two of them have a grand time together. But when they hear the click of Agnes' key in the lock, back to the tapestry on the wall goes the Dragon.

Often now when Agnes has the members of her missionary club in for one of their meetings she points with understandable pride to the magnificent tapestry.

"A very old piece," she says. "I brought it back from China with me. The Imperial Dragon, you know. Beautiful, isn't it — one of my choicest treasures."

But should Agnes look closely, she'd see that one eye of the Dragon in the tapestry on the wall is closed in a sly wink.

Why do STARS TWINKLE?

WHEN we look at the stars on a clear night they often seem to flicker and twinkle.

Everyone knows the old rhyme, *"Twinkle, twinkle, little star. How I wonder where you are."* But the stars themselves really do not twinkle. If you could climb up above the atmosphere surrounding the earth and look at the stars, you would see them shining with a clear, steady light. It is because we see the stars through the atmosphere that they seem to twinkle.

The twinkling is caused by differences in air temperature. Some layers of air are hotter than others, and one layer is always swirling and moving through another. These layers of air bend the starlight in different ways and at different angles. It is this that makes the light of the stars unsteady, similar to the haze we see on a hot day.

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THE OLD SURPRISE

A PICTURE-WORD POEM

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no doubt–

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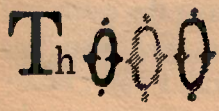
Th  yulet d d

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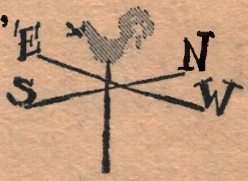
But all in 

So, Christmas m

's surpr

Turns out 2

The same old

Verse by BEE LEWI

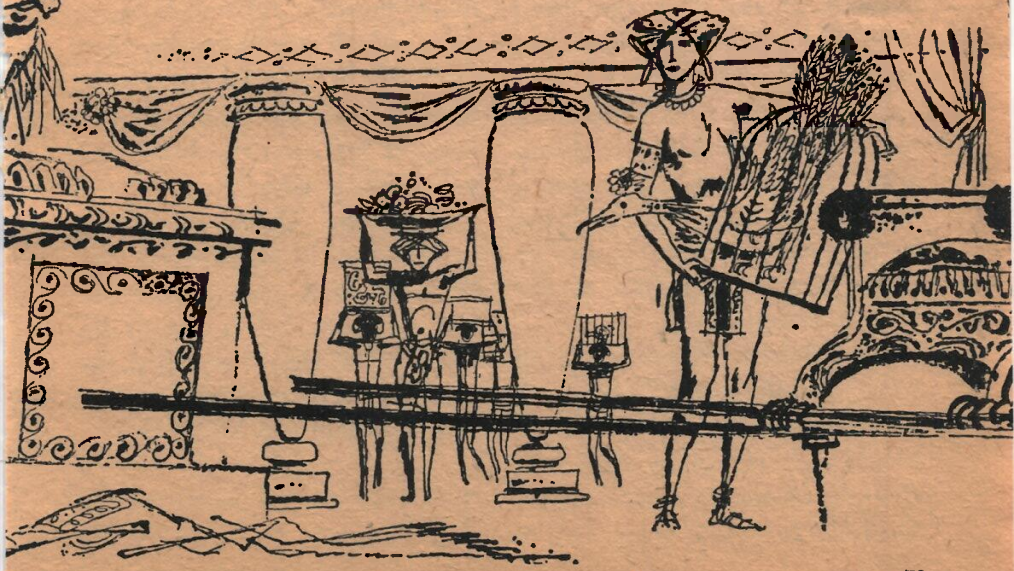
A story by **ELIZABETH COATSWORTH**

the Wisdom of King Solomon

Who would win in this great test of wits, the wisest man in the world or the beautiful Queen of Sheba?

NOW in the days of Solomon's might and glory, the Queen of Sheba heard of his fame and came from her kingdom beyond Egypt to question him.

Their meeting was like the meeting of the sun and the moon; she was as beautiful as he was handsome. All about him stood youths chosen for their comeliness,



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and about her were gathered maidens like stars shining in a cloudless sky. His crown blinded the eyes, and hers bewildered the mind. When the king arose from his throne to greet her, the attendants stood still with admiration, and when the queen mounted the steps to sit beside him, her grace was such that a sigh of wonder rose from the throng.

Then before the eyes of the wise Solomon the queen had displayed the treasures of her kingdom. Partly by art and partly by magic, her workmen had made things such as had never been seen before — a golden bird which could fly and speak, and animals so real that the mind could not believe that they were made by human hands.

Then, as the wise King Solomon gazed upon these things with admiration, the queen ordered her attendants to bring in two vases of flowers and to stand them at the foot of the King's Throne.

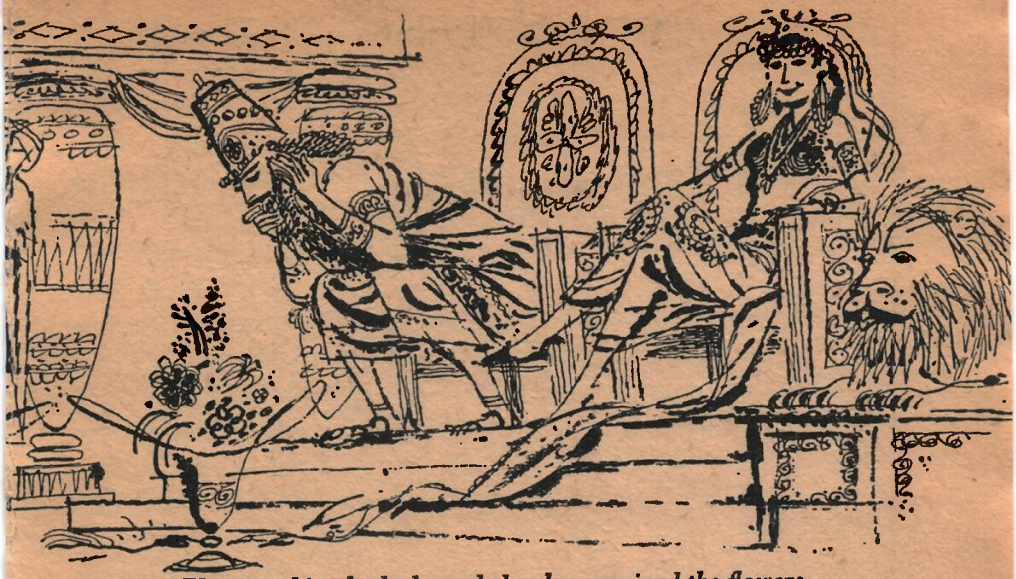
"O Solomon, wisest of living men," said the queen, "I am but a woman and ruler of a weak little kingdom, unworthy of the thought of one so great as thou. So, only to amuse thee, and to

Illustrations by JOHN GRETZER

make thee smile, I have ordered these playthings to be made for thee. Here, now, are two bouquets: one bouquet is made from living flowers and one is but a copy, which my craftsmen have fashioned of enamels and jewels. Stretch forth thy hand of wisdom, O Solomon the Wise, and say which is which."

Then the Queen of Sheba looked meekly at Solomon, but he knew well enough that this was no sport, but a test of his wisdom and that if he failed, the world would ring with laughter and he would lose his glory.

BUT he smiled courteously at the queen and thanked her



The great king looked puzzled as he examined the flowers.

for her gifts. Then he turned his eyes upon the flowers. No words can tell you of the beauty of those blossoms. There were the lilies which he loved, and roses, and sweet-smelling jasmine, all with their leaves. At first he looked for perfections, but lo, dew seemed to tremble upon the petals of both bouquets and he could not choose between them.

Then Solomon, the great king and wisest of men, searched for imperfections, and at last he saw one wilted leaf, and he raised his head and was about to stretch forth his hand, when his eye, glancing at the other flowers, saw among them also one wilted leaf.

Then, having found no aid in perfections or in imperfections, the king sat in silence, and the queen's silence was equal to his, and to all their attendants'. And it was a day of late spring, and beyond the curtains drawn between the pillars of his courtyard Solomon, the great king, heard the bees in his gardens, and suddenly he smiled.

"Draw open the curtains there," he said to one of his attendants.

And when the curtains were drawn, he waited and the queen and the court waited with him.

The sunlight fell in golden pools on the palace floor and now the garden sounds were more distinct. The queen looked puzzled but Solomon merely sat stroking his beard with the same curious smile on his face. The buzzing of the bees grew louder and the hush of the court deepened. Then the eyes of the great king and the beautiful queen met for an instant like swift swords parrying each other.

And after a while, a bee entered and flew toward the throne and the flowers before it. And Solomon, the great king, smiled in his beard, for the bee had no hesitation. The bee was not deceived by beautiful workmanship, by jewels, or by enamels. Straight as an arrow, the creature flew to its flower, and Solomon turned to the queen and raised his hand to point to the true bouquet.

Now if you think that the Queen of Sheba respected Solomon, the wise king, less because he had been forced to call in a bee to instruct him, you are wrong. She, too, was wise and she saw that the great king understood the universe and knew to whom to go for instruction, if only to a bee. And this time she bowed her head before him, not in mockery, and gave him the treasure which she had brought from her kingdom with her.

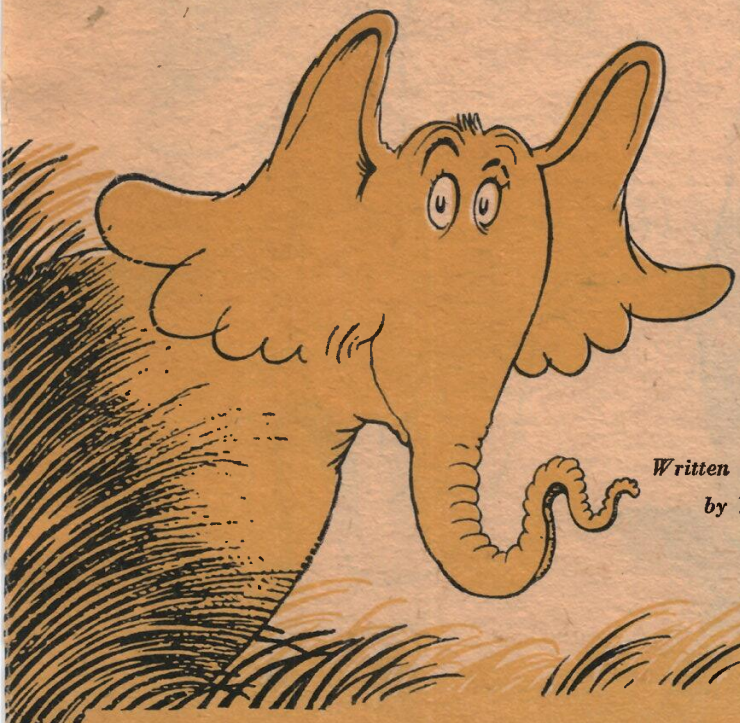
THE E-Z A-Z GAME

HOW fast can you find a certain letter on a magazine page? The faster you are the more skillful you will be in playing this unusual game.

Each player holds a magazine that is opened to whatever page the player wishes. When someone calls out "Go!" everyone starts looking for an "A" on their page. As soon as a player finds it he circles it with a pencil or crayon. Then he finds a "B" on the page, circles it, and so on through the alphabet.

The first player to circle all the letters from A to Z is declared the winner of the game.

HORTON HEARS A WHO!



Written and illustrated by **DR. SEUSS**

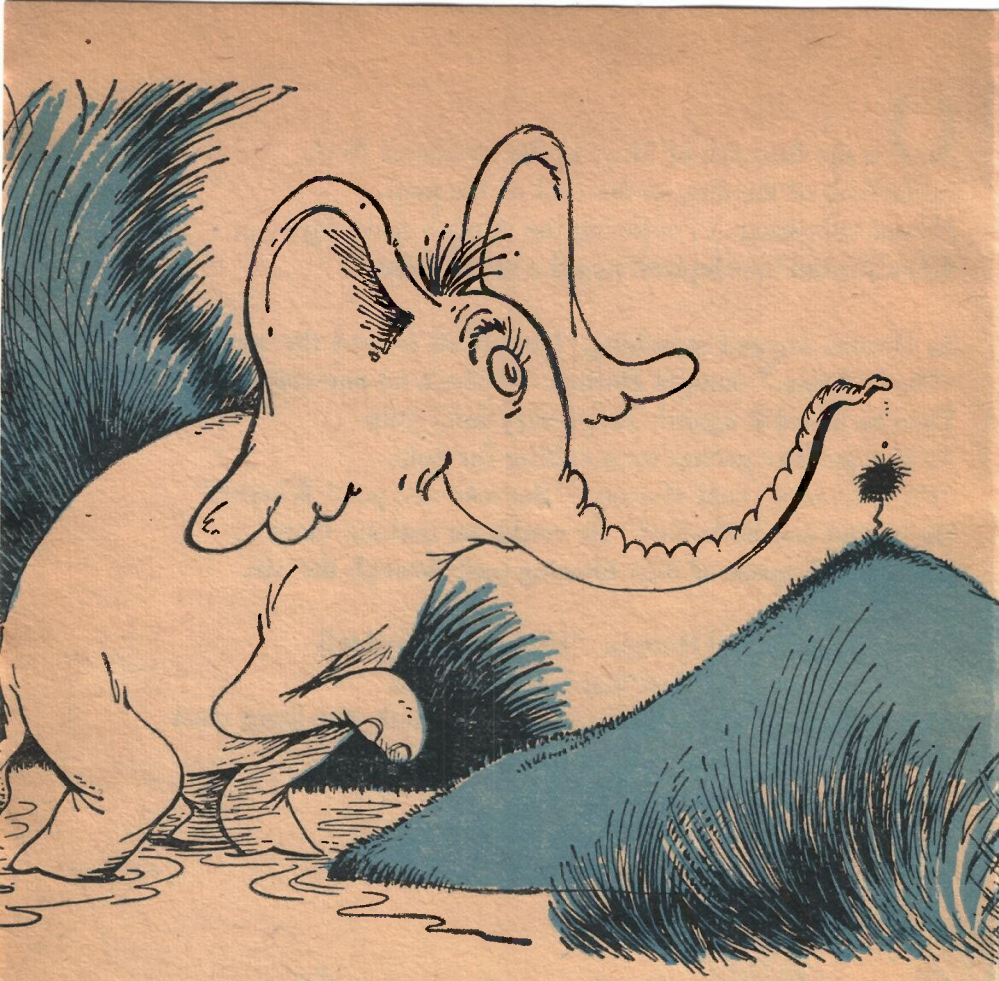
YOU remember Horton, the elephant. Last time he had trouble with an agg. This time it's with a Who. Never heard of a Who, you say. Well, don't let that bother you. Dr. Seuss knows who's Who. Let him tell you.

Adapted from "Horton Hears A Who!" © 1954 by Dr. Seuss, pub. by Random House, Inc.

On the fifteenth of May, in the Jungle of Nool,
In the heat of the day, in the cool of the pool,
He was splashing . . . enjoying the jungle's great joys . . .
When Horton the elephant heard a small noise.

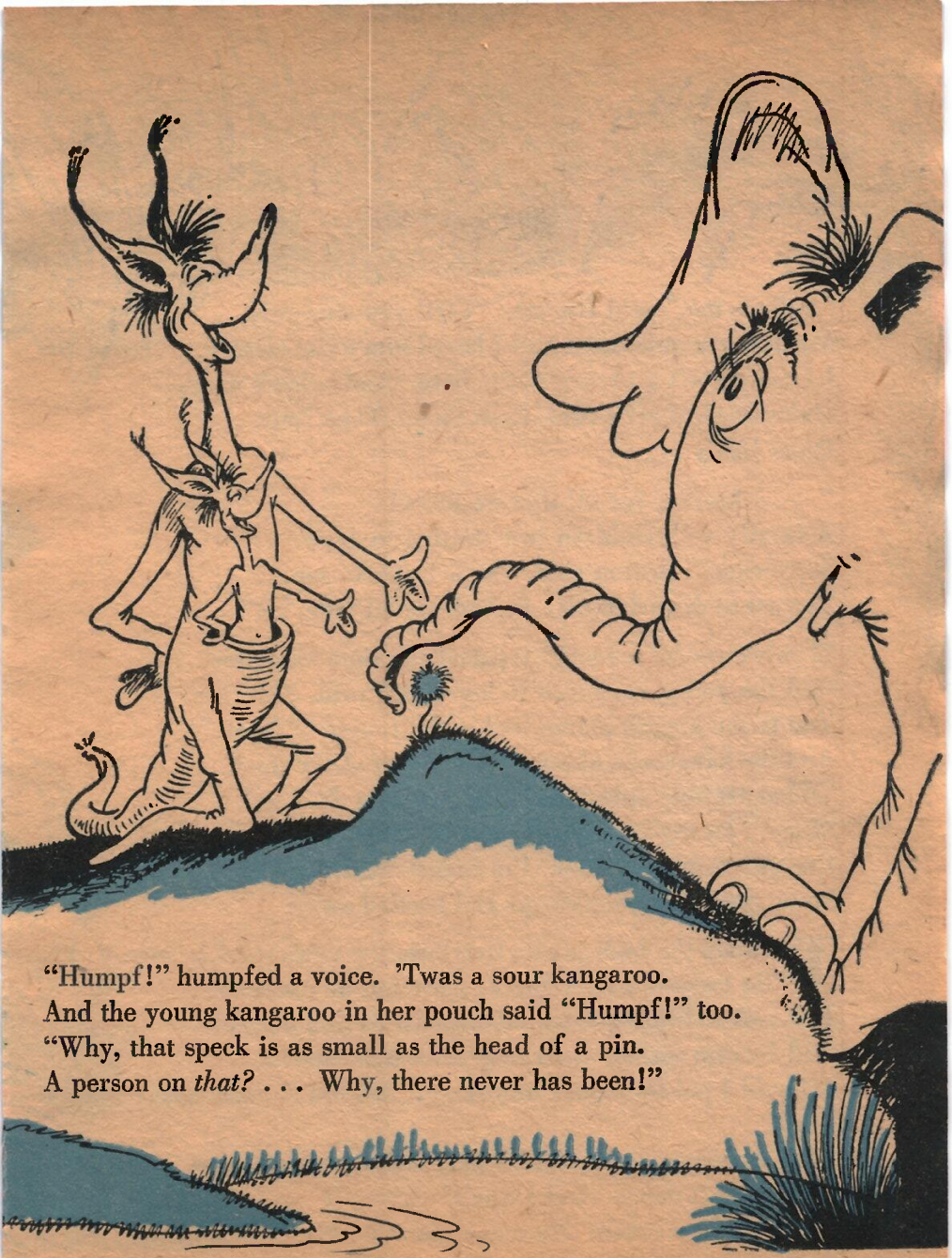
So Horton stopped splashing. He looked toward the sound.
"That's funny," thought Horton. "There's no one around."
Then he heard it again! Just a very faint yelp
As if some tiny person were calling for help.
"I'll help you," said Horton. "But *who* are you? *Where?*"
He looked and he looked. He could see nothing there
But a small speck of dust blowing past through the air.

"I say!" murmured Horton. "I've never heard tell
Of a small speck of dust that is able to yell.
So you know what I think? . . . Why, I think that there must
Be someone on top of that small speck of dust!
Some sort of a creature of *very* small size,
Too small to be seen by an elephant's eyes. . .

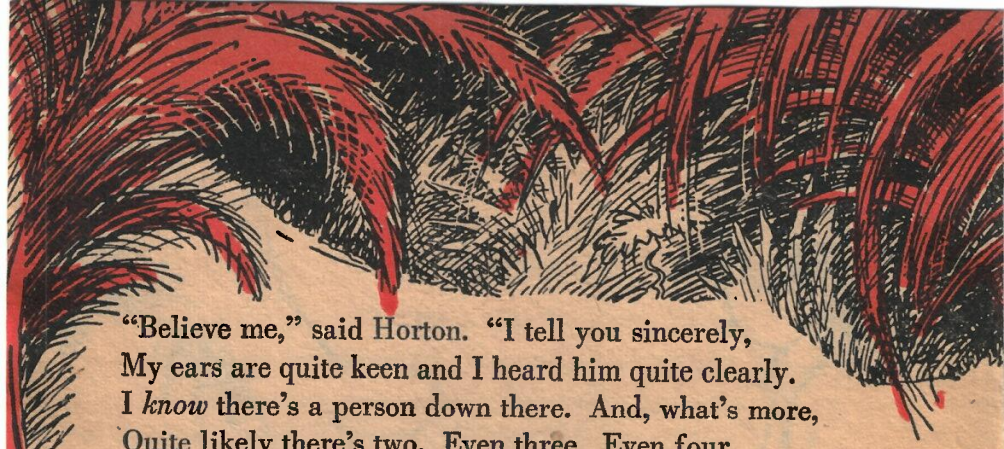


"... some poor little person who's shaking with fear
That he'll blow in the pool! He has no way to steer!
I'll just have to save him. Because, after all,
A person's a person, no matter how small."

So, gently, and using the greatest of care,
The elephant stretched his great trunk through the air,
And he lifted the dusk speck and carried it over
And placed it down, safe, on a very soft clover.



"Humpf!" humpfed a voice. 'Twas a sour kangaroo.
And the young kangaroo in her pouch said "Humpf!" too.
"Why, that speck is as small as the head of a pin.
A person on *that?* . . . Why, there never has been!"



"Believe me," said Horton. "I tell you sincerely,
My ears are quite keen and I heard him quite clearly.
I *know* there's a person down there. And, what's more,
Quite likely there's two. Even three. Even four.
Quite likely . . .

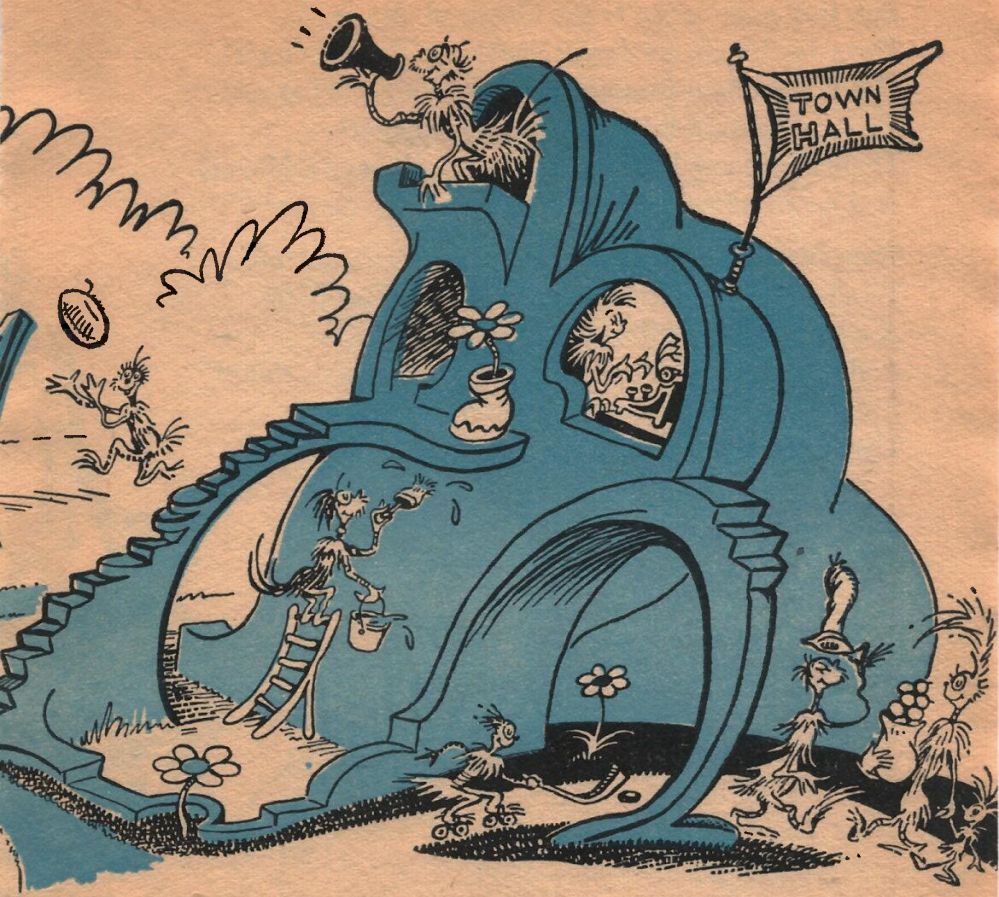
". . . a family, for all that we know!
A family with children just starting to grow.
So, please," Horton said, "as a favor to me,
Try not to disturb them. Just please let them be."

"I think you're a fool!" laughed the sour kangaroo
And the young kangaroo in her pouch said, "Me, too!
You're the biggest blame fool in the Jungle of Nool!"
And the kangaroos plunged in the cool of the pool.
"What terrible splashing!" the elephant frowned.
"I can't let my very small persons get drowned!
I've *got* to protect them. I'm bigger than they."
So he plucked up the clover and hustled away.

Through the high jungle tree tops, the news quickly spread.
"He talks to a dust speck! He's out of his head!
Just look at him walk with that speck on that flower!"
And Horton walked worrying, almost an hour.
"Should I put this speck down? . . ." Horton thought with alarm.
"If I do, these small persons may come to great harm.
I *can't* put it down. And I *won't!* After all
A person's a person. No matter how small."

Then Horton stopped walking.
The speck-voice was talking!
The voice was so faint he could just barely hear it.
"Speak *up*, please," said Horton. He put his ear near it.

"My friend," came the voice, "you're a *very* fine friend.
You've helped all us folks on this dust speck no end.
You've saved all our houses, our ceilings and floors.
You've saved all our churches and grocery stores."



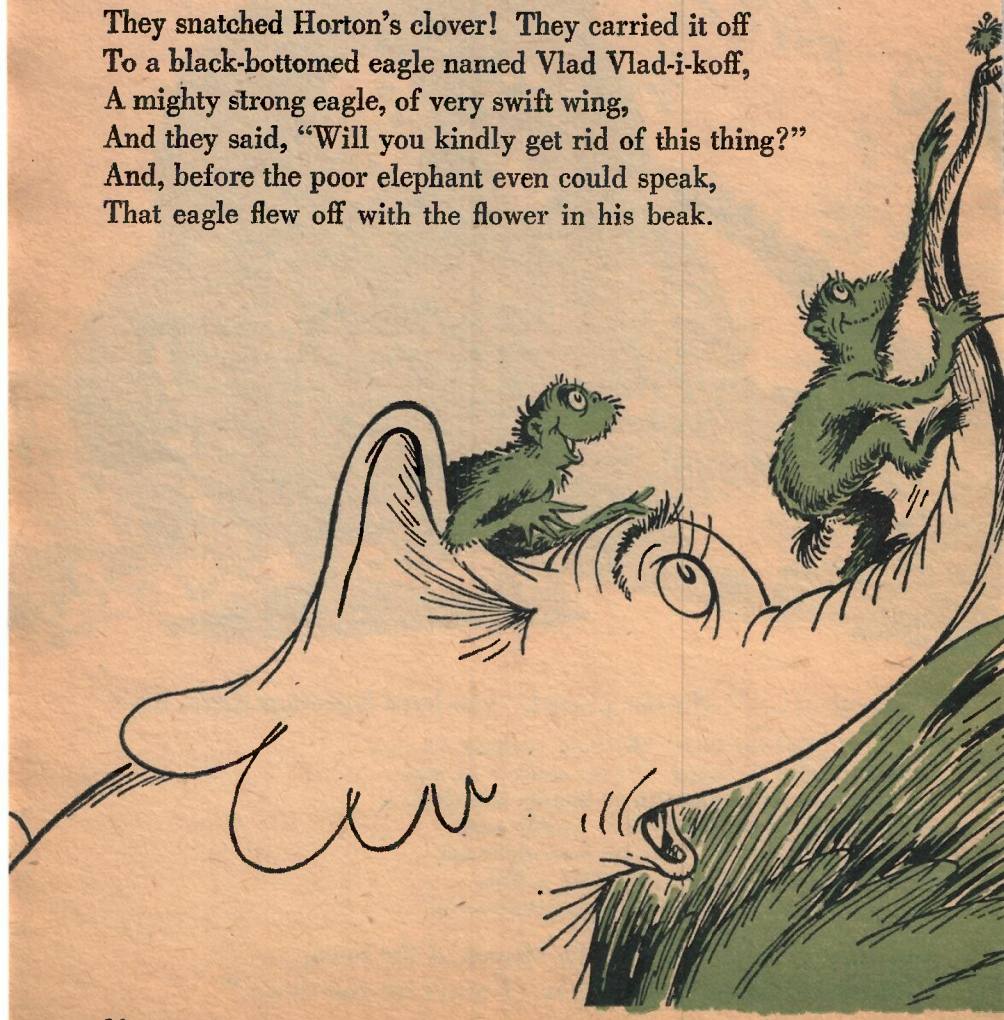
"You mean . . ." Horton gasped, "you have *buildings* there, *too?*"

"Oh, yes," piped the voice. "We most certainly do. . . .
"I know," called the voice, "I'm too small to be seen
But I'm Mayor of a town that is friendly and clean.
Our buildings, to you, would seem terribly small
But to us, who aren't big, they are wonderfully tall.
My town is called *Who*-ville, for I am a *Who*,
And we *Whos* are all thankful and grateful to you."

And Horton called back to the Mayor of the town,
"You're safe now. Don't worry. I won't let you down."

But, just as he spoke to the Mayor of the speck,
Three big jungle monkeys climbed up Horton's neck!
The Wickersham Brothers came shouting, "What rot!
This elephant's talking to *Whos* who are *not!*
There *aren't* any *Whos!* And they *don't* have a Mayor!
And *we're* going to stop all this nonsense! *So there!*"

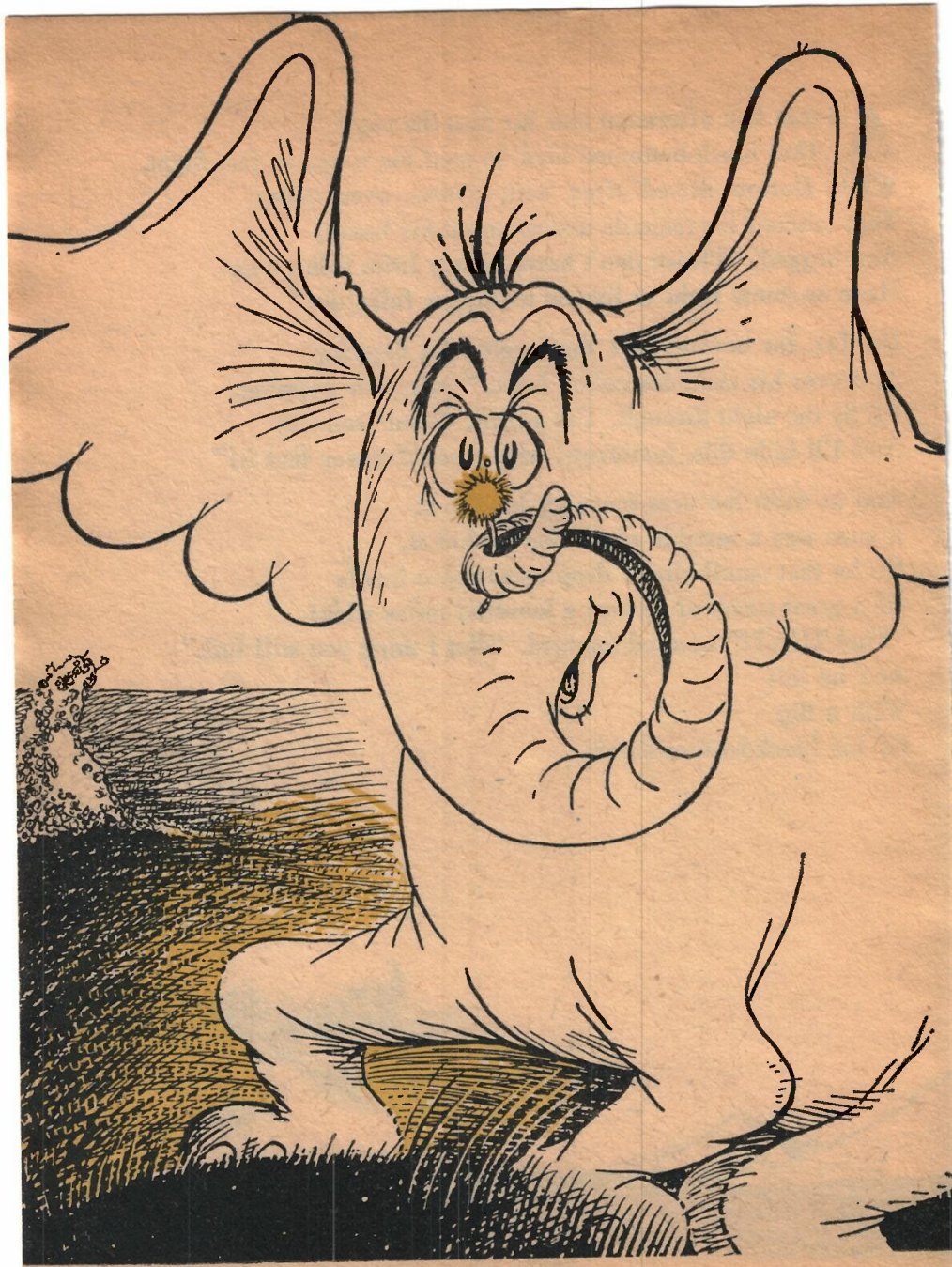
They snatched Horton's clover! They carried it off
To a black-bottomed eagle named Vlad Vlad-i-koff,
A mighty strong eagle, of very swift wing,
And they said, "Will you kindly get rid of this thing?"
And, before the poor elephant even could speak,
That eagle flew off with the flower in his beak.



All that late afternoon and far into the night
That black-bottomed bird flapped his wings in fast flight,
While Horton chased after, with groans, over stones
That tattered his toenails and battered his bones,
And begged, "Please don't harm all my little folks, who
Have as much right to live as us bigger folks do!"

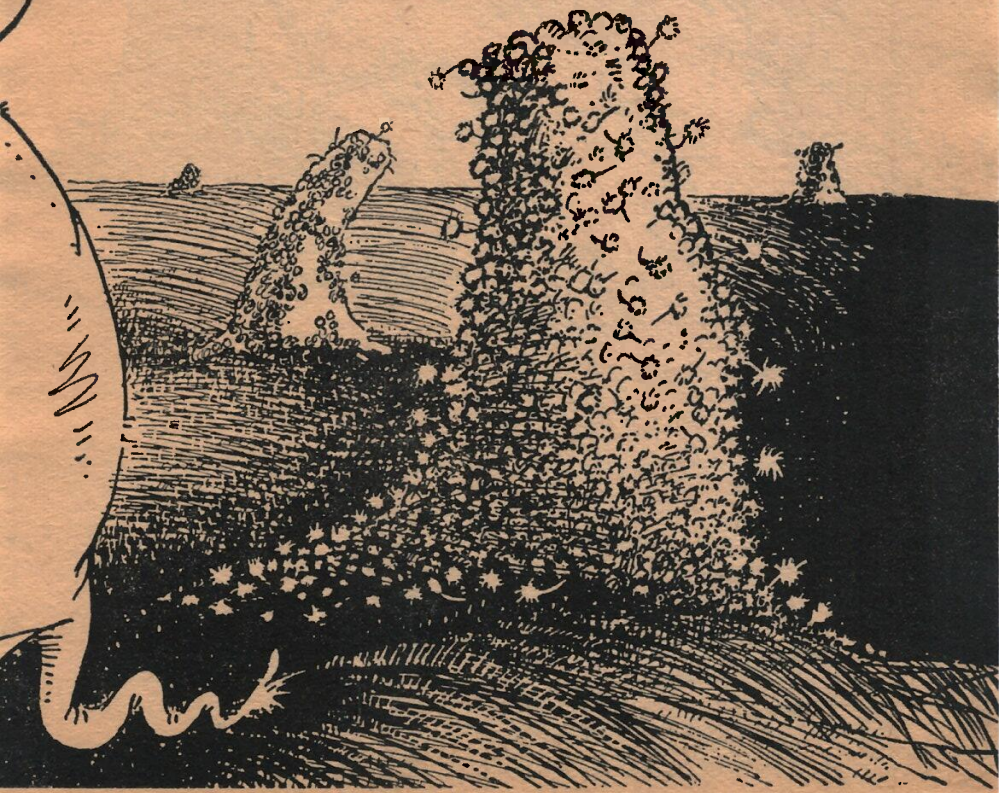
But far, far beyond him, that eagle kept flapping
And over his shoulder called back, "Quit your yapping.
I'll fly the night through. I'm a bird. I don't mind it.
And I'll hide this, tomorrow, where *you'll* never find it!"

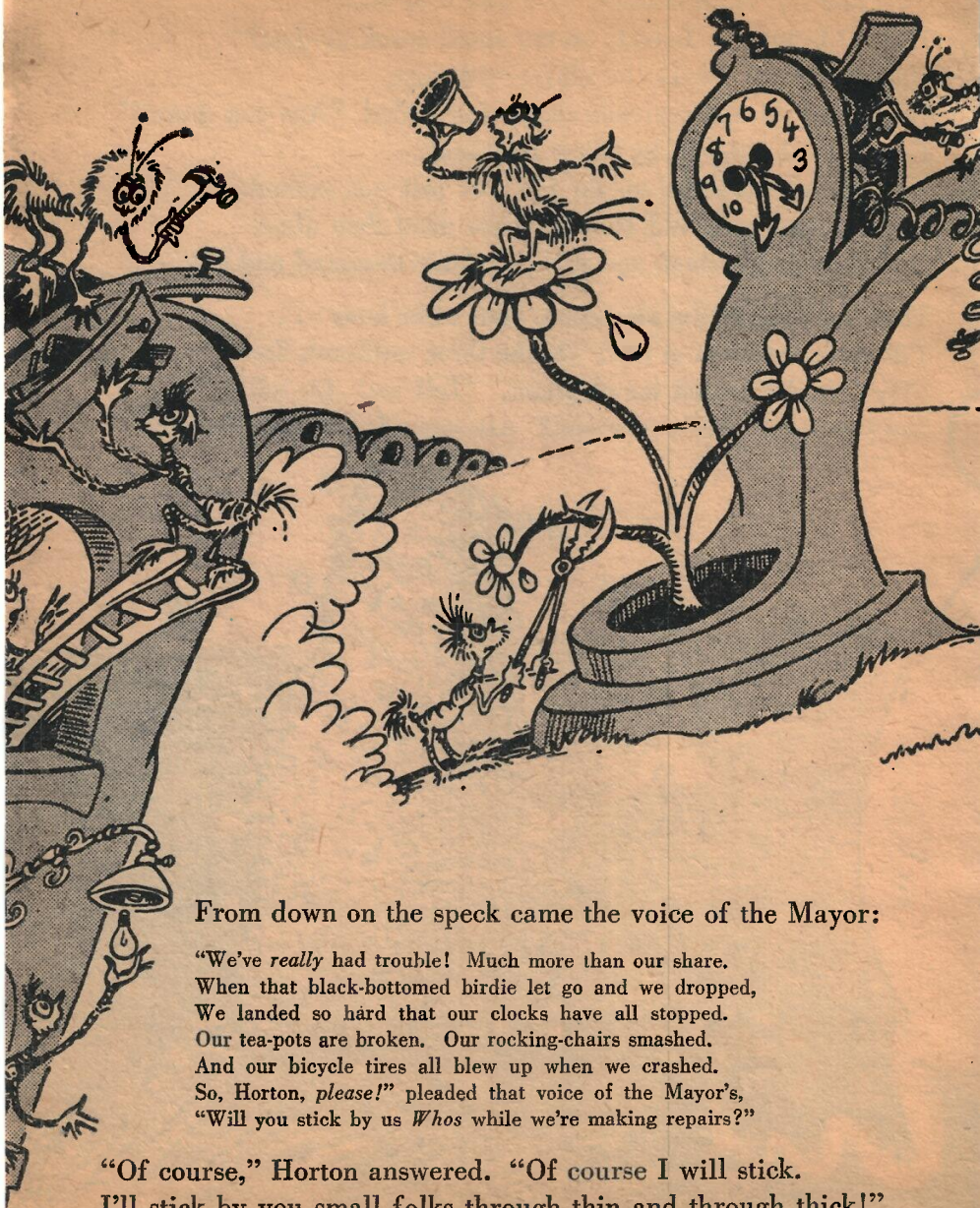
And at 6:56 the next morning he did it.
It sure was a terrible place that he hid it.
He let that small clover drop somewhere inside
Of a great patch of clovers a hundred miles wide!
"Find THAT!" sneered the bird. "But I think you will fail."
And he left
With a flip
Of his black-bottomed tail.



"I'll find it!" cried Horton. "I'll find it or bust!
I SHALL find my friends on my small speck of dust!"
And clover, by clover, by clover with care
He picked up and searched them, and called, "Are you there?"
But clover, by clover, by clover he found
That the one that he sought for was just not around.
And by noon poor old Horton, more dead than alive,
Had picked, searched, and piled up, nine thousand and five.

Then, on through the afternoon, hour after hour . . .
Till he found them at last! On the three millionth flower!
"My friends!" cried the elephant. "Tell me! Do tell!
Are you safe? Are you sound? Are you whole? Are you well?"

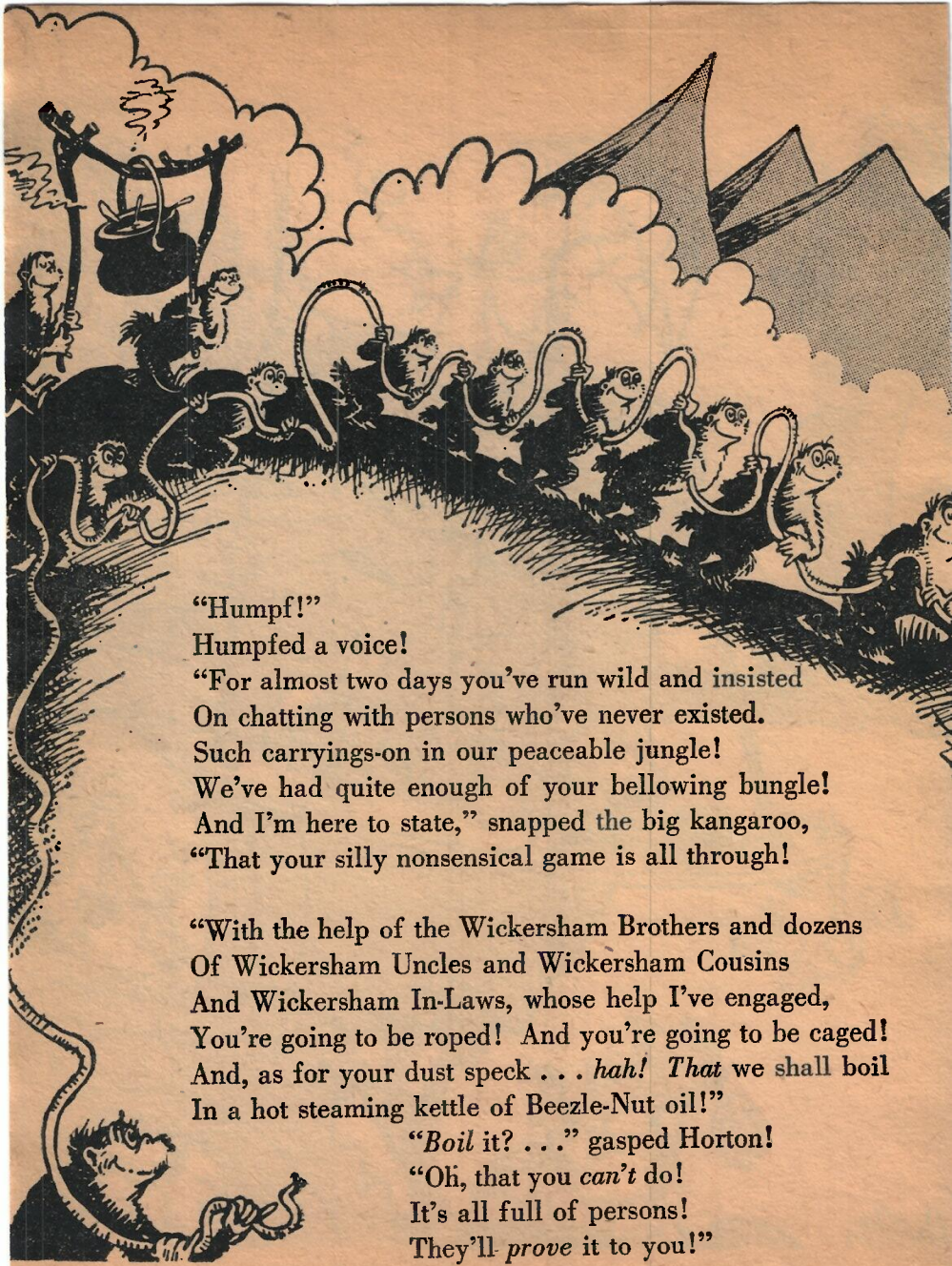




From down on the speck came the voice of the Mayor:

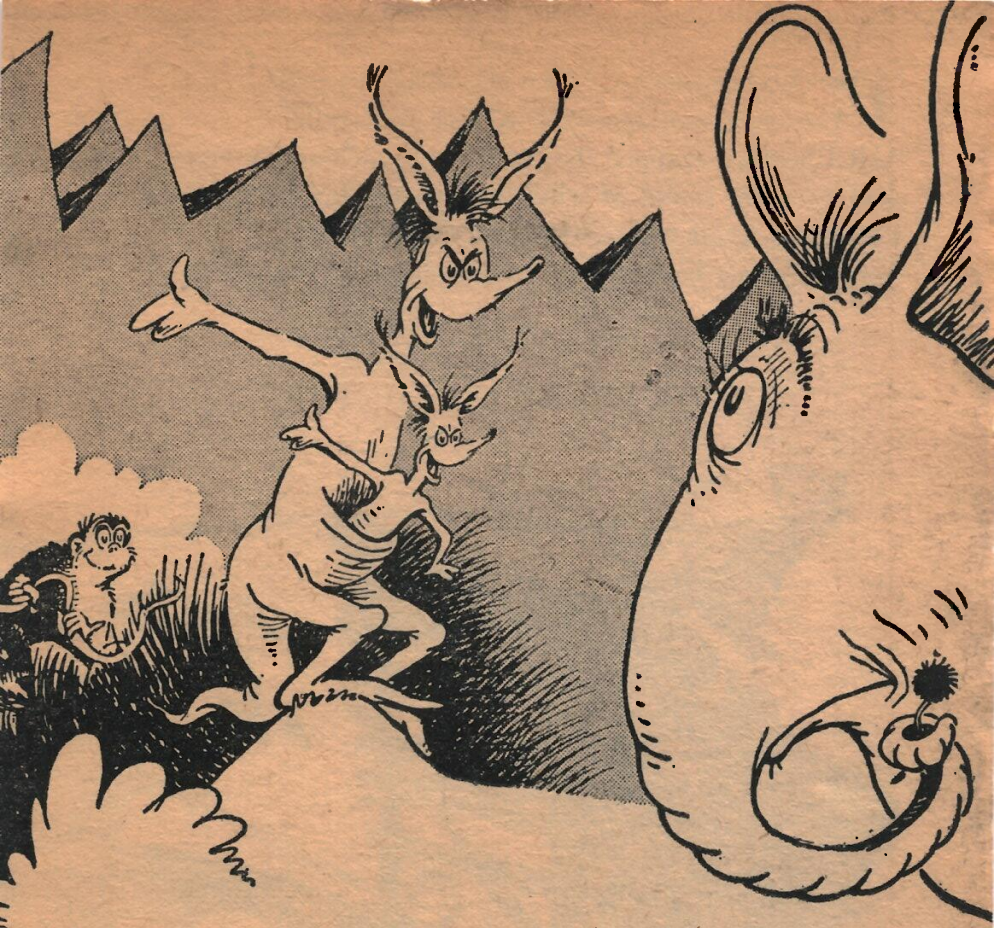
"We've *really* had trouble! Much more than our share.
When that black-bottomed birdie let go and we dropped,
We landed so hard that our clocks have all stopped.
Our tea-pots are broken. Our rocking-chairs smashed.
And our bicycle tires all blew up when we crashed.
So, Horton, *please!*" pleaded that voice of the Mayor's,
"Will you stick by us *Whos* while we're making repairs?"

"Of course," Horton answered. "Of course I will stick.
I'll stick by you small folks through thin and through thick!"



"Humpf!"
Humpfed a voice!
"For almost two days you've run wild and insisted
On chatting with persons who've never existed.
Such carryings-on in our peaceable jungle!
We've had quite enough of your bellowing bungle!
And I'm here to state," snapped the big kangaroo,
"That your silly nonsensical game is all through!

"With the help of the Wickersham Brothers and dozens
Of Wickersham Uncles and Wickersham Cousins
And Wickersham In-Laws, whose help I've engaged,
You're going to be roped! And you're going to be caged!
And, as for your dust speck . . . *hah! That* we shall boil
In a hot steaming kettle of Beezle-Nut oil!"
"*Boil* it? . . ." gasped Horton!
"Oh, that you *can't* do!
It's all full of persons!
They'll *prove* it to you!"

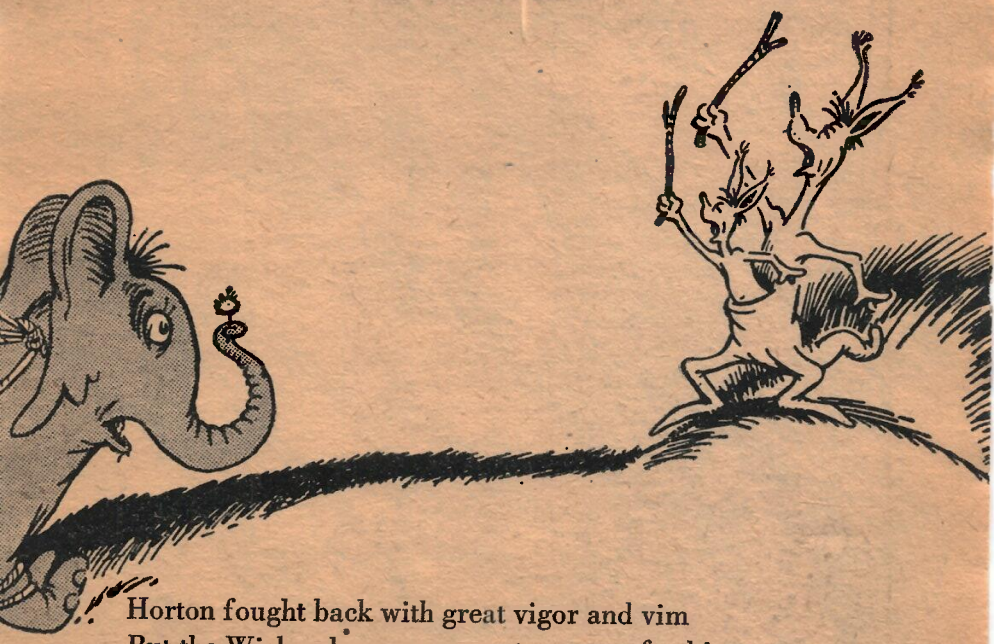


And, down on the dust speck, the scared little Mayor
Quick called a big meeting in *Who*-ville Town Square.
And his people cried loudly. They cried out in fear:
"We are here! We are here! We are here! We are here!"

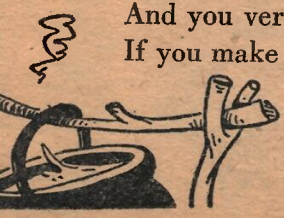
"Mr. Mayor! Mr. Mayor!" Horton called. "Mr. Mayor!
You've *got* to prove now that you really are there!
So call a big meeting. Get everyone out.
Make every *Who* holler! Make every *Who* shout!
Make every *Who* scream! If you don't, every *Who*
Is going to end up in a Beezle-Nut stew!"

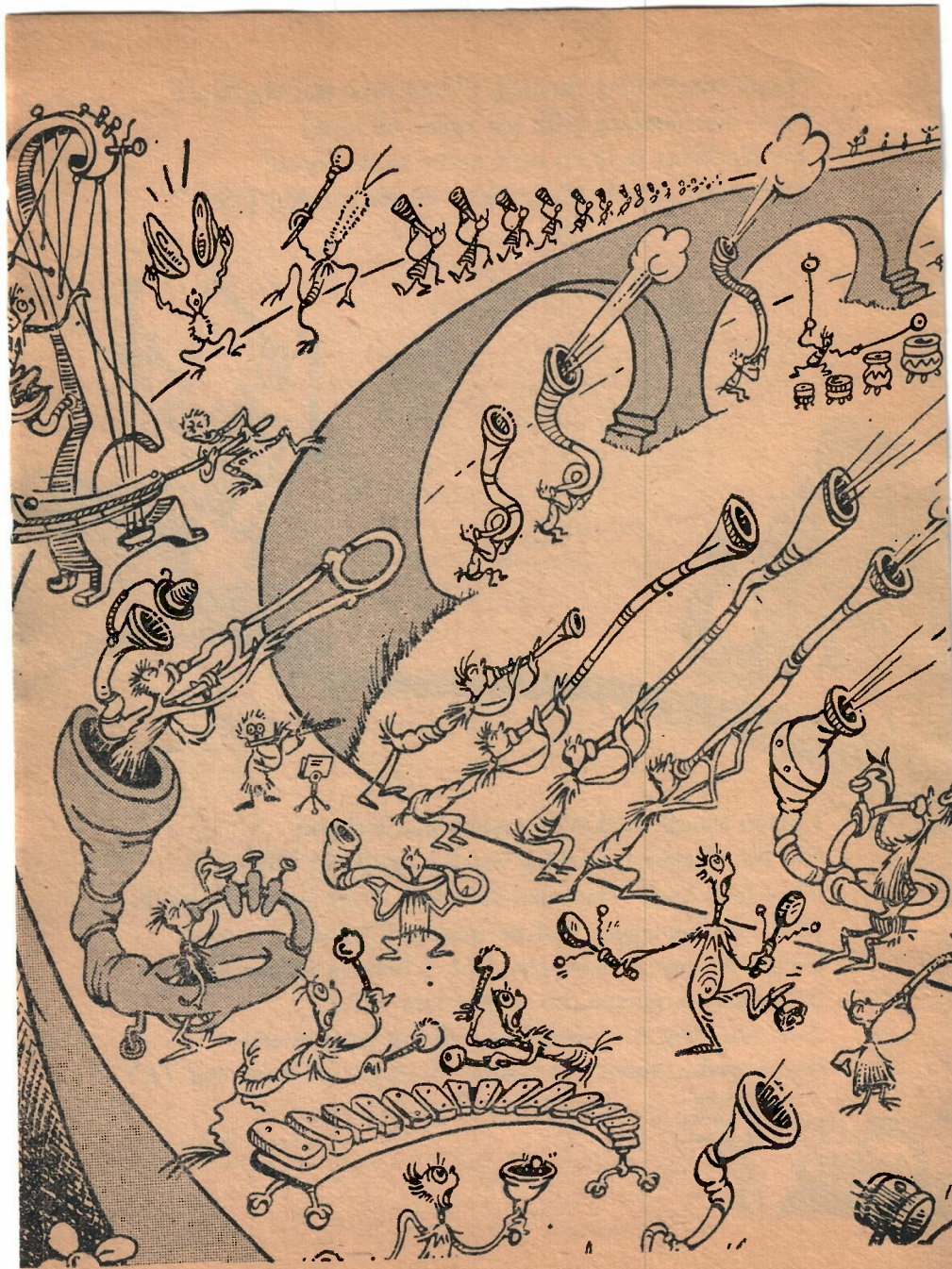
The elephant smiled: "That was clear as a bell.
You kangaroos surely heard *that* very well."
"All I heard," snapped the big kangaroo, "was the breeze,
And the faint sound of wind through the far-distant trees.
I heard no small voices. And you didn't either."
And the young kangaroo in her pouch said, "Me, neither."

"Grab him!" they shouted. "And cage the big dope!
Lasso his stomach with ten miles of rope!
Tie the knots tight so he'll *never* shake loose!
Then dunk that dumb speck in the Beezle-Nut juice!"



Horton fought back with great vigor and vim
But the Wickersham gang was too many for him.
They beat him! They mauled him! They started to haul
Him into his cage! But he managed to call
To the Mayor: "Don't give up! I believe in you all!
A person's a person, no matter how small!
And you very small persons will *not* have to die
If you make yourselves heard! *So come on, now, and TRY!*"

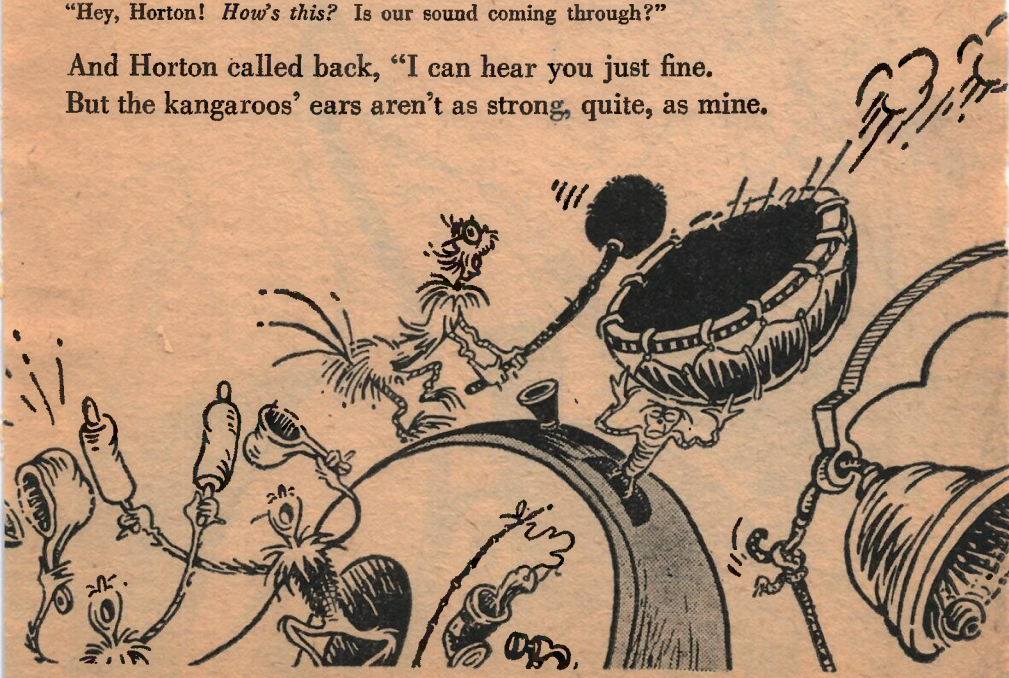




The Mayor grabbed a tom-tom. He started to smack it.
And, all over *Who*-ville, they whooped up a racket.
They rattled tin kettles! They beat on brass pans,
On garbage pail tops and old cranberry cans!
They blew on bazookas and blasted great toots
On clarinets, oom-pahs and boom-pahs and flutes!

Great gusts of loud racket rang high through the air.
They rattled and shook the whole sky! And the Mayor
Called up through the howling mad hullabaloo:
"Hey, Horton! *How's this?* Is our sound coming through?"

And Horton called back, "I can hear you just fine.
But the kangaroos' ears aren't as strong, quite, as mine.



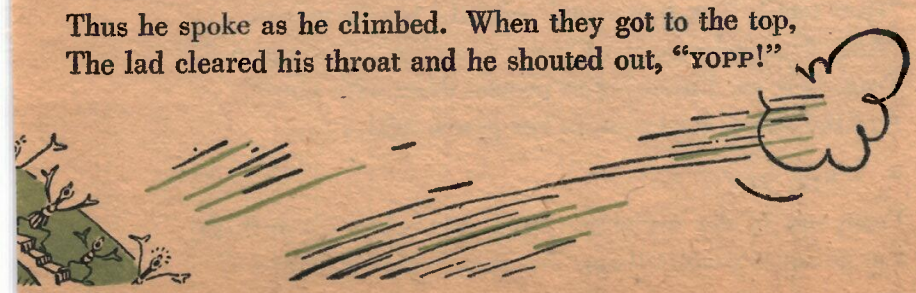
They don't hear a thing! Are you *sure* all your boys
Are doing their best? Are they ALL making noise?
Are you sure every *Who* down in *Who*-ville is working?
Quick! Look through your town! Is there anyone shirking?"

Through the town rushed the Mayor, from the east to the west.
But *every*one seemed to be doing his best.
*Every*one seemed to be yapping or yipping!
*Every*one seemed to be beeping or bipping!
But it *wasn't enough,* all this ruckus and roar!
He HAD to find someone to help him make more.
He raced through each building! He searched floor-to-floor!

And, just as he felt he was getting nowhere,
And almost about to give up in despair,
He suddenly burst through a door and that Mayor
Discovered one shirker! Quite hidden away
In the Fairfax Apartments (Apartment 12-J)
A very small, *very* small shirker named Jo-Jo
Was standing, just standing, and bouncing a Yo-Yo!
Not making a sound! Not a yipp! Not a chirp!
And the Mayor rushed inside and he grabbed the young twerp!

And he climbed with the lad up the Eiffelberg Tower.
"This," cried the Mayor, "is your town's darkest hour!
The time for all *Whos* who have blood that is red
To come to the aid of their country!" he said.
"We've GOT to make noises in greater amounts!
So, open your mouth, lad! For every voice counts!"

Thus he spoke as he climbed. When they got to the top,
The lad cleared his throat and he shouted out, "YOPP!"



And that Yopp . . .
That one small, extra Yopp put it over!
Finally, at last! From that speck on that clover
Their voices were heard! They rang out clear and clean.
And the elephant smiled. "Do you see what I mean? . . .
They've proved they ARE persons, no matter how small.
And their whole world was saved by the Smallest of All!"

"How true! Yes, how true," said the big kangaroo.
"And, from now on, you know what I'm planning to do?
From now on, I'm going to protect them with you!"
And the young kangaroo in her pouch said, . . .

". . . ME, TOO!
From sun in the summer. From rain when it's fall-ish,
I'm going to protect them. No matter how small-ish!"

THE TRAIN HAS GONE! AH, THE STILLNESS!
STOP THE CAMERA!
WHERE'S THAT MUSIC COMING FROM?
THE KID — WITH HIS HARMONICA!
BEAT IT!
AND DON'T COME BACK!
I LIKE TO MAKE PEOPLE HAPPY WITH MY HARMONICA, BUT NOBODY WANTS TO HEAR IT.
THE DIRECTOR'S THROUGH WITH THIS TRAIN. LET'S GO!
BUT THE DIRECTOR FORGETS HE DISMISSED THE TRAIN. SO...
WE'LL SHOOT THE TRAIN SCENE AGAIN. START TALKING — THEN THE TRAIN WILL APPROACH.
LISTEN TO THE WHISTLE OF THE TRAIN — THE CHUG OF WHEELS!

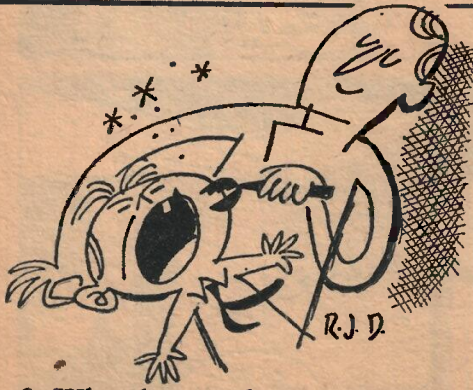
WHERE'S THAT TRAIN?
IT'S GONE.
YOU SAID YOU WERE FINISHED WITH THE TRAIN!
GET IT BACK- FAST!
BUT THE TRAIN WAS ALREADY BEING USED FOR ANOTHER PICTURE. SO...
WE'LL RECORD THE SOUND EFFECTS WHILE WE WAIT. MAKE A NOISE LIKE A TRAIN!
I CAN'T - I'VE NEVER BEEN A TRAIN!
MAYBE I CAN HELP.
CHUG CHUG TOOT TOOT
TERRIFIC! PERFECT! IN FACT, IT'S GOOD. EVERYBODY BACK IN PLACE- WE'LL SHOOT THE SCENE.

CHUG CHUG TOOT TOOT CLICKETY CLICK
LISTEN TO THE WHISTLE OF THE TRAIN - THE CHUG OF WHEELS!
I KNEW YOU COULD DO IT!
IT WASN'T ME - IT WAS THE KID WITH THE HARMONICA.
YOU? THE KID I SHOOED AWAY?
I'M SORRY, SIR. I'LL LEAVE NOW.
OH, NO YOU DON'T LEAVE - NOT UNTIL THIS FILM IS DEVELOPED AND YOU SEE - WELL, JUST WAIT!
LATER...
SPECIAL SOUND EFFECTS BY PUFFER AND HIS SUPER HARMONICA
OH, BOY - WAIT TILL ALL THE KIDS SEE THIS!

Riddles

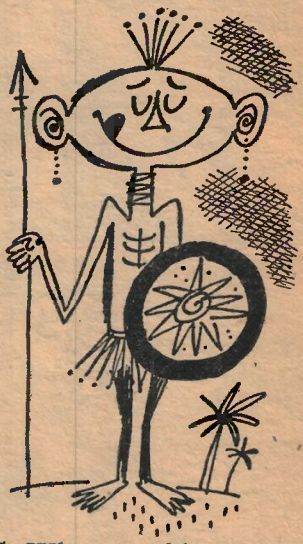
1. What did the drum say to the drummer boy?

2. Why was Adam an impolite man?



3. Why do you forget a tooth after it is pulled?

4. Why does a flag wave?



5. What would a cannibal be who ate his mother's sister?

6. What is round, has two eyes, but cannot see?

7. If the heads of tribes are called chiefs, what are their daughters called?

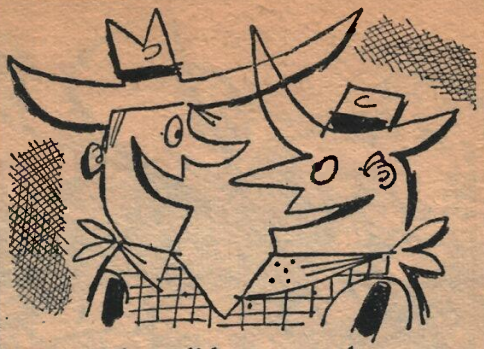
8. How can a bird quickly dispose of all the cherries on a tree?

9. What is a red-headed girl called on a bus?

10. Why should you beware of the ocean?

11. When is the time like the whistle of a train?

12. What has two heads and always stands on one of them?



14. What did one cowboy say to the other cowboy?

13. If you tumbled downstairs, what would you fall against?

15. When is a large ear of corn like a question?

16. When does an Irish potato change its nationality?

17. Why are telephone wires put on such high poles?

18. How did little Bo Peep lose her sheep?

19. Why is the Fourth of July like a plate of soup?

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES

1. "If you beat me, I'll call out the troops." 2. Because ladies should always be first. 3. Because it goes right out of your head. 4. Because it can't say "Hello." 5. An aunt-eater, of course. 6. A button. 7. Mischiefs. 8. By taking a peck at a time. 9. A passenger. 10. There's something fishy about it. 11. When it is two to two. 12. A barrel. 13. Against your wishes. 14. "There's a good eastern playing at the movie-house tonight." 15. When you are popping it. 16. When it becomes French fried. 17. To keep up the conversation. 18. She had a crook with her. 19. It is enjoyed with crackers.

"After him, you fools!" shouted the captain angrily.

The RUNAWAY SOLDIER

The king's life was in terrible danger. And the only man who could save him was a deserter from his own army!

A story by FRUMA GOTTSCHALK

IN a certain Russian province there lived a peasant who had two sons. One day the older son was called to serve in the king's army. He packed his belongings, and went off to the capital to become a soldier.

A few years passed and the younger son went off to serve his king and country. When he joined the regiment in which he was to serve, he found that his older brother

From "The Runaway Soldier" by Fruma Gottschalk, © 1946 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

had meanwhile become a captain. He was proud of his brother and immediately went to see him. But to his great disappointment, the captain said to him, "I do not want to know you! You must not tell a soul that we are brothers, for I am now an important person and you are just an ordinary soldier."

The younger brother was hurt, but he decided not to let it worry him and to be as good a soldier as he could.

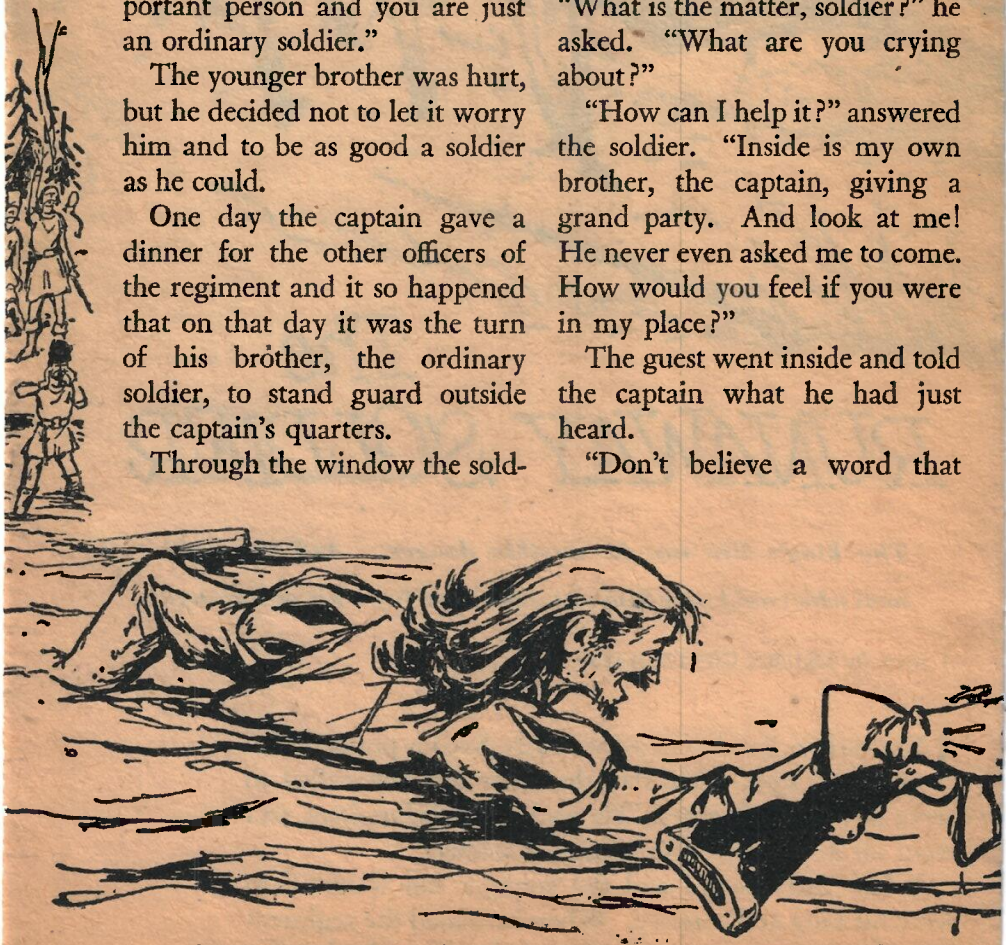
One day the captain gave a dinner for the other officers of the regiment and it so happened that on that day it was the turn of his brother, the ordinary soldier, to stand guard outside the captain's quarters.

Through the window the soldier saw how gay the officers were and how much fun they were all having. He could not help feeling sad and he began to weep bitterly. One of the captain's guests, who came late for the party, noticed that the soldier on guard was shedding big tears. "What is the matter, soldier?" he asked. "What are you crying about?"

"How can I help it?" answered the soldier. "Inside is my own brother, the captain, giving a grand party. And look at me! He never even asked me to come. How would you feel if you were in my place?"

The guest went inside and told the captain what he had just heard.

"Don't believe a word that

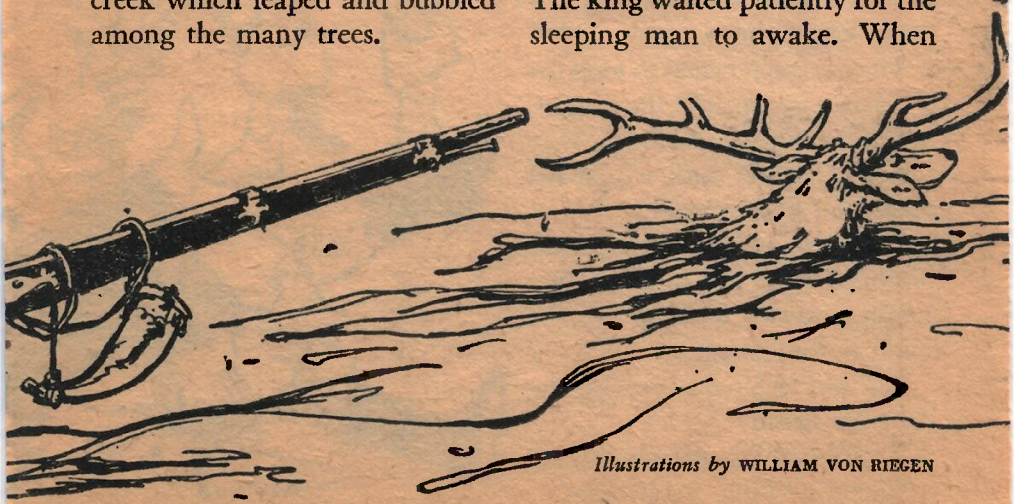


The stag leaped into the water and swam away swiftly. But the king

soldier said," was the captain's answer. "He told you a lie. I never saw him before in my life!" The captain was very angry. He at once gave orders to have his brother put under arrest and thrown into prison.

THE soldier heard his brother give the order and decided not to wait to be arrested. Covering up his uniform with an old coat, he ran away. He wandered about till he reached a forest where the growth was so thick that other people seldom went there. It was a good hiding place, for he could feed on berries and roots that grew all around, and drink from the little creek which leaped and bubbled among the many trees.

Shortly afterward, the king and his courtiers went hunting in the same forest. A beautiful stag leaped up in front of them, then dived into the creek and swam across it. The king swam after it — but when he reached the other bank of the creek and looked around, the stag had already disappeared. He searched far and wide but with no success. At last, worn out, he sat down to rest. He realized that he was lost and all alone in the dark, black forest. His courtiers were nowhere in sight. Not a single path could be seen. As his eyes became accustomed to the darkness, he noticed the runaway soldier fast asleep under a tree. The king waited patiently for the sleeping man to awake. When



Illustrations by WILLIAM VON RIEGEN

would not give up his prize and plunged after him in hot pursuit.

the runaway soldier opened his eyes, he was astonished to see a well-dressed man sitting next to him and looking at him.

"Who are you?" asked the soldier politely. "What brings you here into this black forest?"

Thinking that it would not be wise to tell a stranger who he really was, the king replied, "I am a servant of His Majesty, the king. I was hunting with his courtiers and got lost in this forest. Can you show me the way out, for I don't know where my companions are?"

The soldier, seeing that he had nothing to fear from his new neighbor, answered, "It is getting dark, brother. You'll have to wait till morning. I don't know the way too well."

The two men began to look for a place to spend the night. Stumbling in the darkness, they found a narrow path which led them to a little cottage.

"Oho, you've brought me luck, brother," cried the soldier. "We might just as well spend the night in this cottage."

An old woman opened the door for them.

"Good evening, grandmother."

"Good evening, gentlemen."

"Can you give us food and drink, for we are hungry?"

"I have eaten all there was myself, and there is nothing left."

The soldier did not believe her; she seemed too anxious to

What a miserable, wretched-looking lot

get rid of them.

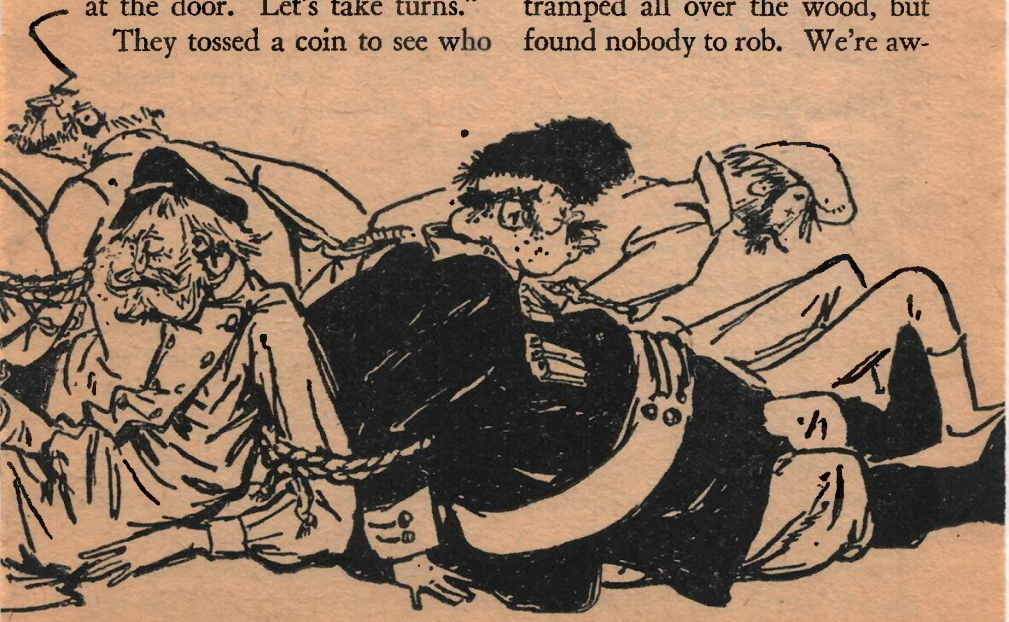
"You are lying, old woman," he said sternly. "I can smell the fresh bread that you have just baked."

There was nothing for her to do but to let the men have the food she had hidden in the cellar. After they had eaten they were ready for bed. The old woman, by this time thoroughly frightened, prepared a room for them in the garret. "We can't both sleep at the same time," said the soldier. "I don't trust the old lady. While one of us rests, the other will have to keep watch at the door. Let's take turns."

They tossed a coin to see who would be first to stand guard, and the king got the first turn. They went up to the bedroom in the garret, and while the soldier lay down to sleep the king took his stand at the door.

Then the king crawled into bed while the soldier stood guard. Very soon he heard strange noises downstairs. Five robbers had come into the cottage. The soldier overheard the old woman whisper to them, "There are two men spending the night here."

"That's all right, grandmother," the soldier heard one of the robbers say. "We have tramped all over the wood, but found nobody to rob. We're aw-



those robbers were as they lay there, bound neatly together hand and foot.

fully hungry. Hurry and get some supper!"

"But those two men have eaten all the food and drunk all the wine. I haven't a thing left in my cellar."

"Why, those miserable scoundrels! Where are they?"

"They've gone to sleep in the garret."

"That's fine. I think I'll teach those two fellows a lesson."

SO the robber crept up to the garret; but as soon as he poked his head through the door, the soldier hit him with the butt of the king's rifle and he fell unconscious to the floor still as a stone.

All was quiet for a while. Then voices came up from downstairs once more.

"What a long time it takes him to handle those two fellows," complained another robber. "I'd better go see for myself." He crept up to the garret and poked his head in to see what had happened to his companion. Again the soldier was ready, and struck the second robber on the head. He, too, fell unconscious. A third robber followed the second; then a fourth and a fifth. The soldier knocked them unconscious one after the other. He emptied their pockets of the gold they had stolen, and, with some rope that he had found in the king's hunting pouch, he tied them all up.

The king had slept soundly while all this was going on. At dawn he woke up and saw the robbers lying at the door, firmly tied together.

"Well, my good friend," he said in surprise, "did all of this happen while I was asleep? Why, we must have been in terrible danger."

The soldier told the king about his adventures with the robbers and showed him all the gold he had taken from their pockets. Then, dividing the gold into two equal parts, he said, "This belongs to you. As for me, I shall try to find the real owner of my share and give it back to him."

"Thank you, my dear friend," answered the king. "You may keep my share, too. The king I serve is generous and kind. He pays me well and I have all the wealth I need. I'm sure he wouldn't like me to keep money that had been stolen."

"All right. Do as you like. Come; I shall show you the road to town. When you get there, be

sure to tell your king that the robbers are tied in the garret and that he should send guards to get them."

They went downstairs together, where they found the old woman, who owned the cottage. She was very frightened. Turning to her the soldier threatened, "If you help those men to escape, you will land in jail, too!" And leaving the cottage, the soldier and the king took the road that led to town.

"Goodbye, my friend," said the king, as he shook the soldier's hand. "I shall never forget that you saved my life. You must come to the palace soon, for the king will reward you for your kindness to me."

"That's easier said than done" replied the soldier. "I am a deserter from the king's army and the minute I show myself in town, I'll be seized and put in the guardhouse."

"Have no fear, soldier," the king assured him gently. "I am certain that the king will forgive you if I tell him about your bravery."

"Very well. I shall do as you say and will come," the soldier promised.

As soon as the king got back to the palace, he sent an order to all the sentries to be on the lookout for a runaway soldier and, if they saw him, to salute him as if he were a general.

Next morning the soldier went to the palace, as he had promised. On the road he met a

"For your bravery," said the king, and pinned a gold medal on his chest.

sentry standing guard. He tried to pass the sentry box unnoticed, but much to his surprise, the guard, instead of stopping him, stood stiffly at attention.

The soldier looked around to see whom the sentry was saluting. Finding no one, he asked, "What are you saluting for?"

"I am saluting you, sir," answered the sentry.

PLEASED, the soldier took out a handful of the gold he had taken from the robbers and gave it to the guard. Then he continued toward the palace. Whenever he passed a sentry box, the guard gave him a general's salute and he gave the guard a handful of gold, until his gold was all gone.

"What a cheat that king's servant must be!" thought the soldier, as he reached down penniless. "He must have told the guards that I had plenty of money. But it wasn't even my own money, and now I can't give it back to the owners."

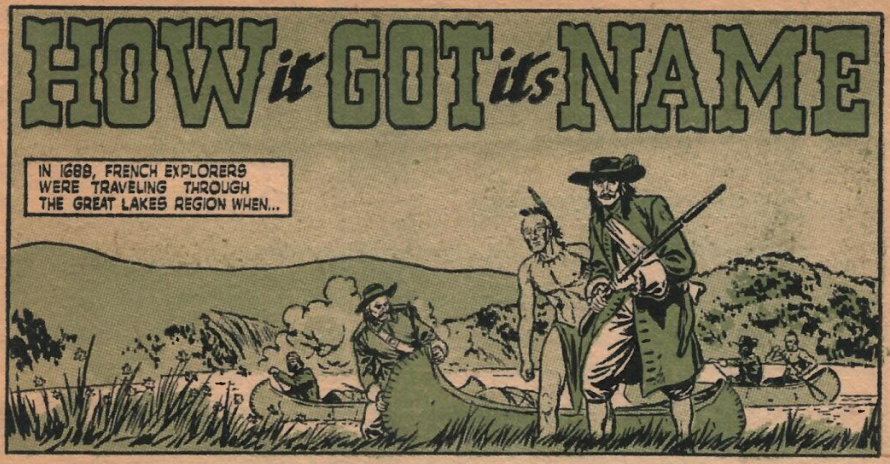
So, getting angrier and angrier, the soldier drew near the king's palace. When he came to the gate, he saw the entire royal army drawn up there. At the head of all the regiments rode the king, wearing the same clothes he had worn when he was lost in the forest. The soldier at once recognized his friend of the night before, and he understood that it was the king whom he had scolded about not knowing how to stand guard. He turned as white as a ghost. When the king came up to him, he could hardly speak.

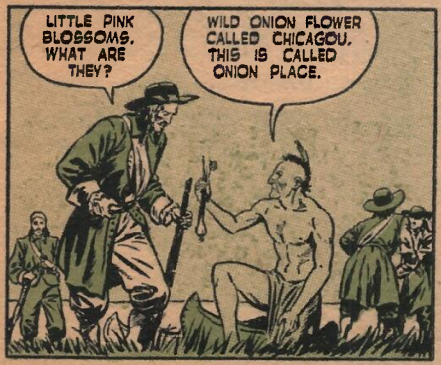
"Forgive me, Your Majesty," he pleaded. "I never realized you were the king or I would not have dared to speak to you as if you were my equal."

"Don't be afraid, my good friend," said the king, taking the soldier's hand. "You were brave and honorable. I don't know many soldiers who can capture five robbers without waking up their companions or who would want to find the owners of the money they took from robbers. From now on you shall be one of my chief advisers."

The king gave the soldier a medal for bravery and made him commander-in-chief of all his army. He never regretted it, for the new commander served him well and faithfully. He was kind to all the soldiers who served under him — even to his older brother, the captain.

HOW it GOT its NAME





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